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BUREAU OF THE CENSUS: 1986 FIELD TESTS

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
ENERGY, NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION, AND
GOVERNMENT PROCESSES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE

NINETY-NINTH CONGRESS

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TUESDAY, JULY 1, 1986

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BUREAU OF THE CENSUS: 1986 FIELD TESTS

TUESDAY, JULY 1, 1986

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY, NUCLEAR
PROLIFERATION, AND GOVERNMENT PROCESSES,
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS,
Meridian, MS.

The subcommittee met at 2 p.m., in the board room of the police department of the city of Meridian, MS, Hon. Thad Cochran (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Senator Cochran.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR COCHRAN

Senator COCHRAN. The committee will please come to order.

I want to welcome all of you to this hearing of our Subcommittee on Energy, Nuclear Proliferation, and Government Processes of the U.S. Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs.

The purpose of our hearing in Meridian today is to review the test conducted by the Bureau of the Census in eight east Mississippi counties. This is one of several tests that the Census Bureau will conduct in preparation for the 1990 decennial census. These tests serve as opportunities for trying out different procedures and techniques that will help ensure a more accurate and complete census. They also provide an opportunity to try out publicity and community outreach programs to encourage greater public participation and response. All of these efforts are designed to ensure an accurate count of our population, which is required by the Constitution for the purpose of apportioning the U.S. House of Representatives.

However, the data derived from the decennial census are also a valuable resource for all levels of government as well as private industry and the academic community. Approximately $100 billion in Federal and State funds are distributed on the basis of census data.

All reports indicate that the east Mississippi test was successful and will contribute to the Census Bureau's planning for the 1990 census.

This subcommittee has held hearings in Washington, at which Dr. Keane and his staff have appeared and testified regarding the status of their planning and preparation for the 1990 census. I was very pleased to learn that Mississippi had been selected by Dr. Keane and his staff as a place to conduct a test of the procedures and the questionnaires and techniques for conducting the next census. It has meant a lot of new jobs for our State. It has given us an opportunity to find out how the census may work in 1990, and provided us an opportunity to take a look at the ways that the ac-

curacy of the census collection—data collection—process can be improved. I'm sure this hearing is going to contribute to our subcommittee's responsibility for maintaining oversight over the census.

We're delighted that Dr. Keane is here today and has provided the subcommittee with a very full and complete statement to describe the activity that has been going on and the progress that has been made in the test of this activity in this census.

With him are Martha Mann and Willie DeBerry and Larry Driskell, as our first panel. Martha Mann is the office manager and Willie DeBerry has been involved in the community outreach program here at the Meridian office. Larry Driskell is a postal supervisor. Dr. Keane is the director of the U.S. Census in Washington, DC. We are delighted that he is here.

We will make a part of the record your complete statement, Dr. Keane, and will ask you to proceed in any manner that you wish to summarize or highlight the information that you've provided to the subcommittee.[1]

TESTIMONY OF JOHN G. KEANE Ph.D, DIRECTOR, BUREAU OF THE CENSUS, ACCOMPANIED BY MARTHA MANN AND WILLIE DeBERRY,[2] COLLECTION/PROCESSING OFFICE, BUREAU OF THE CENSUS, MERIDIAN, MS; AND LARRY W. DRISKELL,[3] POSTAL SUPERVISOR, U.S. POSTAL SERVICE, UNION, MS

Mr. KEANE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The delight that you express is certainly ours; and on behalf of the Census Bureau and on behalf of myself, we are delighted to have had our test, this important test, in your State of Mississippi. It has gone well, and I will overview some of the specifics about that now.

I approach it from four different subtopic areas: one, the planning schedule involved; two, the test objectives we had for our test here in Mississippi; three, some comment about the experiences and result of that test; and then close with a few comments.

The first topic I will discuss is how the test fits into the 1990 census planning schedule. The 1986 census of east central Mississippi is one of several test censuses we are conducting for the 1990 census. In other words, all in all, we have 11 test censuses plus a dress rehearsal, so this fits into that sequence and is an important part of the total program. And that's the way it should be looked at—the total program of tests rather than just an isolated one.

The test censuses themselves can be considered as laboratories for actually trying out, under censuslike conditions, different options and approaches that have surfaced in our internal review and consulation with outside data users. We have conducted major tests each year since 1984 when this program began, with test censuses in Connecticut and Georgia and now here, and we've had them every year since then and will through the dress rehearsal year, 1988.

In 1988, that will be the full dress rehearsal. We recently announced that the dress rehearsal site will be the city of St. Louis, and the 14 central counties, rural counties, in Missouri, and several

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[1] See p. 25 for Dr. Keane's prepared statement.
[2] See p. 39 for Mr. DeBerry's prepared statement.
[3] See p. 42 for Mr. Driskell's prepared statement.

counties in the State of Washington. We intend to make the dress rehearsal a true dry run of census procedures for 1990. That will be our triumph and the last thing that we do really of a program test way before the 1990 census. We do not want to make any changes after that dress rehearsal, so we only fine-tune the process.

Now, on to the test objectives for the Mississippi test. We began to identify our objectives for this 1986 test census all the way back in 1984. Because of the complexity and the diversity of our country, we wanted to have both rural as well as urban tests. For the rural site, we wanted an area of about 200,000 people, a size big enough to give a true test to our automation systems. We also wanted a site that would have a true mixture of city-delivery and non-city-delivery addresses. This would allow us to test rural address listing and questionnaire delivery methodology. The eight counties we selected in Mississippi met these criteria. In addition, they had diverse population: 64 percent white and 34 percent black, and included an American Indian reservation. We identified many objectives for our test in east central Mississippi and have planned some 60 formal evaluations. That's quite a number, but that shows you the important followup to a test census such as this.

In my full statement, I discuss our test objectives in five major areas. I'll just in one sentence tick those off now:

First, the address lists. We are tesing refinements to our address-listing techniques. We're also testing new procedures for updating and improving the address lists.

Second, is the questionnaire delivery objective. We are preparing two techniques for delivering census questionnaires. One is having mail carriers deliver them. The other is having our own enumerators deliver them. We'll use the mail carriers for most of the country in 1990, but we might use enumerators in some rural areas.

Third, the third test objective: automation. We implemented some new automated operations that we will be using in 1990. These include automated address control files, automated questionnaire check-in, and an early conversion of questionnnaire data into computer readable form.

The fourth test objective had to do with efforts to reduce nonresponse followup workload. We can save money and time by reducing our nonresponse followup workload. That is why we have been testing new ways to increase the mail response rates. Two of the techniques we've tested here are motivational inserts into the questionnaire mailing package itself, and then reminder postcards to residents to mail back their questionnaire when we haven't received them.

And finally, the test objective, the questionnaire content itself. We will report to Congress by April 1987, on the subject areas to be included in the 1990 census questionnaire. In the meantime, we are consulting extensively with data users. We are conducting tests to determine which questions to ask in 1990. The national content test currently underway is our main testing vehicle. But we are also testing wording and format for selected questions in the 1986 census of east central Mississippi and other test censuses.

Now, I'll go to the third area to some of the experiences and results of the tests. This test census here has been a success. That's an overall assessment that we can say and you've alluded to al-

ready, Mr. Chairman. I will discuss two areas that were particularly successful: the better than expected mail response rate and the early completion of the followup operation.

Census day for the 1986 census of east central Mississippi was March 16. We asked householders to mail back their questionnaires to the collection and processing office right here in Meridian on census day, or as soon after as possible. We were very encouraged by the fact that the questionnaires returned were about 63 percent of the units, 63 percent within the 3-week time limit. We had planned on only a 55 percent response rating, and that would have been higher than we had planned on in other areas of the country. Not only could I say was it 63 percent, but that the total mailback—and since I have the office manager checking me, it had better be right—the total mailback, which is very important because it doesn't require labor intensive procedures, was 70 percent, and that is high. We are again talking about test census response and it must be put in that context, and not the decennial census itself. So I can tell you we had those few observations because they are so favorable.

In a census, the higher the mail response rate, obviously, the fewer housing units enumerators have to visit, and this means savings in money and in time to complete the census. Now, while we would expect a high response rate for this area in 1990, when we will have the benefit of national promotional campaign, we believe the response rate achieved in the test census was quite good. This high mail response rate was due in large part to the cooperation of the residents here and to the very successful promotional campaign we had.

Mr. Willie DeBerry, down the table from me, our census awareness specialist, will be talking in some detail about our promotional campaign, but I can tell you now my hat is off to him for his contribution. Obviously, it has been successful. And I just want to especially thank him and other key officials and persons here who have endorsed the census, the test census, here in the public service announcements.

And, in this regard, I especially want to acknowledge you, Mr. Chairman, for giving your valuable time to help in the effort of encouraging public support for the census. Thank you, sir.

I also want to acknowledge the great support efforts of Congressman Montgomery, Congressman Webb Franklin, and Dr. Aaron Henry, president of the Mississippi NAACP. I don't believe there are any Members of Congress in the audience, but is Dr. Henry here by any chance? If any of his friends are here, please thank him for me. We're indebted to him. Because it was all of you, you distinguished people, who helped us in our broadcasts and public service messages.

And, of course, we are especially grateful to Miss America, Susan Akin of Meridian, who loaned her grace and appeal and intelligence to the census promotional effort. I happen to know that she taped those six announcements on one of her very few vacation days. It was Christmas vacation time, 1985, and this shows you what a great choice the judges made in choosing her because this is something that she didn't have to do but was something that we're grateful she did do. I understand her parents, Dorothy and Harry

Little, were going to try and make this hearing. Are they here? OK, if their friends are here, please thank them.

So this is what makes a census. It's you and it's us working together, public-spirited citizens, who care about a census and see that it is in the self-interest of all of us to have a good one. So having the census endorsed by such prominent individuals who are known and respected by the local population was a priceless asset for us in our promotional campaign and the resulting outcome.

Now, I'll switch my discussion to what happened after census day, and particularly the followup operation. About 3 weeks after census day, again which was March 16, we began to visit door to door and complete questionnaires for those housing units, for which questionnaires had not been returned by mail. This operation, which we call nonresponse followup, is one of the most difficult and challenging parts of the census taking. One of the major successes we had in the census here was completing our nonresponse followup in 3 weeks instead of the scheduled 4 weeks. That's a savings of 25 percent of the allotted time. I congratulate you, Martha Mann, and your entire staff, for a job very, very well done. We have consistently completed operations on time or ahead of schedule, and you can't ask for much more than that. We also credit our new procedures we instituted for administering and controlling the enumeration with contributing to the early completion and followup that I've mentioned.

Although the census here was basically a success, we did encounter some minor problems, but we expect to have problems in a test census. That's part of doing this because if we didn't have a problem, we likely wouldn't have any conclusions as to how to improve our process and ultimately we become complacent, so we expected this and we acknowledged this, and we are setting about to correct those. For instance, I might add that I've just finished about an hour ago meeting with the enumerators, and some of our crew asked them, "How could we do things better?" And they weren't shy about telling us. So we got some useful feedback, all of us from headquarters and from our regional office.

Closing comments: Well, we're in this final stage now, and this is the wrap-up stage of our east central Mississippi test, so this includes various coverage checks to make sure that we've done what we think we were supposed to do, and our personal visits to get additional information on some questionnaires. In late July or early August, we will send preliminary counts of local officials for their review, so they'll have a chance before the final official counts go out.

In conclusion, through our various tests and evaluations, we expect to gain much knowledge, and we will acquire this knowledge building a better 1990 census. In 1990, we can all look back to the 1986 census in east central Mississippi as a milestone in our planning process. The 1990 census in population and housing will mark the bicentennial anniversary of census taking in this country. If our experience here is any indication, I know we can count on the support of Mississippians to make it the best effort.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your continuing support as evidence by this hearing.

Senator COCHRAN. Thank you, Dr. Keane, for your excellent presentation.

I think before we get into questions of you or the other members of the panel, we'll hear from Willie DeBerry, who I understand has a statement about the outreach program that was used here to develop communitywide participation in the census process.

Mr. DeBerry, welcome. You may proceed.

Mr. DEBERRY. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to come before the subcommittee and to explain some of the activities and some of the impact that was made by the Census Awareness Program during the 1986 census, hoping from that we can understand how it relates to getting a high-level return rating.

Experience has shown early on that in order for any census to truly be successful, the public must be well informed of its existence and of the benefits that they and their community can realize as the result of a complete count. With this in mind, I, as the census awareness specialist, developed a rather rigorous ongoing program to keep the public informed of our census involvement in east central Mississippi. In the process, I would like to briefly describe four activities that became the main thrust of our overall Census Awareness Program. These include public awareness coverage afforded by the media; an activity that came to be known as Census Sabbath, where we solicited the vocal support of church groups and ministers; a school curriculum project; and assistance and support provided by the local Complete Count Committees.

With reference to the media, the amount of participation and cooperation that we received from both the electronic and print media in all eight counties, including the Choctaw Reservation, was simply outstanding. The coverage that they afforded us included a countless number of press releases, 33 media appearances involving Census Bureau personnel, such as press conferences and participation in talk shows, as well as numerous other media exposures, including taped announcements to keep the public informed. In addition, we had, as Dr. Keane alluded to, Miss America, who did some service announcements, but we also had 30 billboards featuring Miss America, which were provided over a 6-county area. And I also want to add that we ran these billboards for 5 weeks in succession, and that was an exceptional time and space provided by that particular billboard company, and we are very much appreciative to that billboard company.

The Census Sabbath Program was a process by which we hoped to utilize the ministers and the church groups throughout these counties. We compiled a 450-minister list and church organizations throughout the entire area, and we mailed out requests for their support of our census effort. For example, we asked that they print in their church bulletins a message about the census on March 16, or that they say something about the significance of the census in a sermon to keep the public informed about the census in east central Mississippi. The response and enthusiasm received from these individuals and organizations was extremely high, and I would like to take this opportunity to applaud their efforts.

The school curriculum project was another project by which we planned to go into the school system, to educate the kids, who

would take this information home to their parents. Materials and packets for the school curriculum project (K–12) were mailed out to 16 school districts, and to all private schools, located within the 8-county area, including the Choctaw Indian Reservation. As I mentioned before, the purpose was to educate the children of the importance of the census, so that they would pass on the information to their parents. Some school districts were unable to implement the project due to a lack of available time. I would like to personally thank the seven districts that did participate, which include the Choctaw Indian School District in Neshoba County; the Kemper County School District in Kemper County; the Union Separate School District in Newton County; the East Jasper Consolidated School District in Jasper County; the Leake County School District in Leake County; and the Louisville Municipal School District in Winston County. Special thanks go to out to the Meridian Separate School District, since they had some form of participation in every school within their district. Incidentally, 4 superintendents, 14 principals and 35 teachers provided post evaluative comments that will help us to further improve this project as we move closer to 1990.

The Complete Count Committees are joint committees made up of individuals from both the principal city within each county and the balance of the county. The mayor of the principal city and the president of the county board of supervisors appointed the persons to serve on this committee, which included, but were not limited to, representatives from the media, religious organizations, minority groups, civic organizations, and so forth. These individuals made speeches on behalf of the Census Bureau, wrote editorials that appeared in local newspapers, produced local public service announcements, distributed census promotional materials, assisted in recruiting census workers, located testing and training sites, and provided numerous other services that helped to make this a successful census. A great deal of praise goes out to the persons who served on these committees; they were volunteers donating valuable time and putting forth much effort.

Without the total involvement of the persons I have mentioned, the Census Awareness Program would not have been successful. The success of the 1986 Census of East Central Mississippi clearly reflects this involvement as well as the dedication of all other persons involved in making this a truly successful census. To them we are truly grateful.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator COCHRAN. Thank you, Mr. DeBerry, for your excellent statement, and for your participation in this census test effort.

We now have Larry Driskell, who is the postal liason, U.S. Postal Service, who also has a statement on the subject. Mr. Driskell.

Mr. DRISKELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me thank you first for the opportunity to come and speak to the committee and represent the Postal Service in our efforts to work with the Census Bureau to have such a successful census test.

In August 1985, the U.S. Postal Service and the Bureau of the Census began a partnership for the eight county area in east central Mississippi. The mail-out/mail-back census was to compile an accurate mailing list for the eight county area in east central Mis-

sissippi, which was to serve as the rural part of the test for the Census Bureau.

Training was the most important part of our goal, to teach our people what our main objective was. First of all, for our rural address list development, our accurate questionnaire delivery, and our maintenance, since a lot of our questionnaires had no addresses at all, so we had to use this as the background for which we trained. We had many people trained to monitor our training services. The Postal Service Training and Development Center, the Bureau of the Census, and the Customer Service from Headquarters U.S. Postal Service was to attend our training sessions. After our much-needed training that we gave to our managers, we sent them back to their offices to train their carriers and clerks for their advance post office check.

The Census Bureau submitted the cards to us that were to be the addresses for which we would correct to make up the information to see if they were correct. This involved somewhere in the neighborhood of 80,365 addresses. Now, the corrections and additions were made on about 40 percent of all of the address listings.

The training for the corrections and additions was given to the carriers on the morning before the address corrections for the listings. The carriers were sent out on the routes and upon their return, they had cased the cards and made the necessary changes. After we had cased all of our cards, our supervisors were to perform a quality control check to insure that the carrier had an address card for each route, each address card on each route. The time that the carrier spent was from 4 to 6 hours extra, so our carriers and our people put extra time in, to insure that the address, the mailing list, were correct and complete.

We began our preparation for census day on March 16 in early February 1986. Again we trained our managers so that we would have the casing checks, for the delivery, and for the verification of all the mailing processes. They were sent back into the field and they trained their carriers and their clerks. And even though it sounds like it was a simple task that we had to do, we had many problems, but none that could not be resolved. We had to cancel our May 6 casing check and reschedule it for March 13, 1986.

Again our carriers cased our census questionnaires and cards. Now, the cards were to let the carriers know that enumerators would deliver a questionnaire to the house, which was a test which the Census Bureau was using, and give us an opportunity to know that they did not have to fill out another questionnaire for a card. They'd fill out a two-part card and they removed one copy and cased one copy, to make sure that when they got on their route that they knew that they had a card or a questionnaire for each route—for each address.

Now we delivered the census questionnaires or cards to each household on March 14—which was 2 days before census day—giving them an opportunity to be at the households when all the publicity was to come about.

Now the Postal Service worked with the Census Bureau to make sure that we had all of the coverage and that everybody was aware of what was taking place. We had to contact each television station, and local newspaper in our town, and to invite them down to

be aware of what we were doing and how the Census Bureau and Postal Service were working together to mail out the cards and the questionnaires.

This test was conducted for the purpose of resolving any problems that might arise during the actual census of 1990. Even though we encountered numerous problems, there were none that we could not resolve working with the Census Bureau on the local level and in Washington.

In conclusion, as a result of the advance post office check, we believe the U.S. Postal Service can do a complete and better job with the address corections and can deliver all census questionnaires for the Bureau. We recommend that the Bureau of the Census and the Postal Service work together and convey to the printer the proper makeup of all address labels and to ensure prompt delivery, and to date the delivery sacks in order to prevent early or late delivery. Also, we suggest that after the addresses have been added and corrected, that the printer keep the mailing address in carrier route presort since each route has been made up in sequence delivery. This would prevent unit distribution and the questionnaires could be mailed at a reduced rate to save taxpayers' money at this time.

Now the purpose of the Postal Service indepth involvement was to assure the Census Bureau and the General Accounting Office that expenses could be controlled and that better results could be obtained by using the Postal Service. As a result, our managers and employees conducted the test professionally and cost efficiently. This advance post office check gave two Government agencies an opportunity to work together for one common goal.

At this time, Senator Cochran, I thank you for the opportunity to give this testimony.

Senator COCHRAN. Thank you, Mr. Driskell, for your assistance in this hearing and for your help in the conduct of the census in this east Mississippi area.

In reading the background material and statements of witnesses prior to the hearing today, I was impressed by the total number of people who were actually involved in this effort. If I'm not mistaken, I came across the number 500 employees, who were hired to take part in this census taking. Is that a correct number, and were all those under your jurisdiction, Ms. Mann? Or did you have Dr. Keane in Washington helping supervise all these people?

Ms. MANN. I believe at our peak of our employment we had some 580 people on our staff at one time. And, yes, they were all directly under me in some way.

Senator COCHRAN. Well, that was a lot of people to keep up with. How did you do it?

Ms. MANN. Well, we had people in the field, field operation supervisors, and crew leaders, and then on down to enumerators.

Senator COCHRAN. Now, the enumerators that are described, as I understand the presentation, are those who actually go out to the places where people live, and try to attain or get the information, to fill out the questionnaires that weren't submitted by mail; is that right?

Ms. MANN. That is correct.

Senator COCHRAN. I know that tests were conducted in other places besides east Mississippi—Los Angeles was one area I know

Dr. Keane mentioned. Tell me about the results and the response there from the people, as compared with the response here in east Mississippi.

Ms. MANN. Well, when you compare with east Mississippi, of course, it's not nearly so favorable. The response there, we closed one of the two offices, it was so low. It wasn't but about 30 percent in the south office and 38 percent in the north office. Ultimately, the response was higher, but never approached anything like 60 or 70 percent. So from a result standpoint, it didn't compare favorably.

But the climate was somewhat different too. There wasn't the media coverage there that there was here. And a prime reason for that is that the Los Angeles test census area covered about 10 percent of the media-coverage area. Therefore, a television station or newspaper or radio station wouldn't take as important, or give us the prime time or space or frequency because of that since it was only going to reach about 10 percent of its circulation; and if that proportion holds, 10 percent of its listenership or viewership. Whereas here—and a lot of it has to do with the work of our people here, Willie and others—they managed to get the media involved here, and we had all kinds of good coverage, and that's print; that's radio; and that's television; and the billboards, of course, on top of that.

We did a better job here in the community inreach and therefore its outreach, that is by getting the community leaders involved here, and I'm not sure why. That's part of our followup evaluation in Los Angeles. But we didn't get the same extensive or intensive involvement there.

And the third reason which strikes me is that the climate is more difficult there. The proportion in the north officesite of Hispanics is about 70 percent, and the south office Hispanics in Los Angeles test area, about 50 percent. Now, the significance of that is this: There is either greater indifference and certainly likely some substantial suspicion of anything that's a Federal Government, or any government, kind of effort, because sprinkled among them would be some, and maybe a significant proportion, of undocumented aliens who are worried about their status. We know from just some of the followup study of the early results and also since a number of us went out with followup enumerators there, that many of them said they didn't know that there was a census going on. That proportion is much, much lower than here. So those are three reasons, or starting purposes for the reasons.

This was not just a good result; it's the outstanding result of our test program to date, and we only have a few more tests to run.

Senator COCHRAN. In terms of the investment that's made, do you consider this to have been a wise use of Federal dollars in trying to project how much can be saved when the 1990 census is actually conducted?

Mr. KEANE. I might want to unbuckle those questions. I certainly consider it a wise investment in both absolute and relative terms. Absolute, in that we met our test objectives and that we got the kind of result that's encouraging, but that we also learned a lot how to improve the process, take less time, make it more accurate.

Savings are hard to pinpoint. The savings aren't our only goal. We also want to improve our accuracy and our efficiency and to get our results out more timely than ever before. And on that latter count, it's a wise investment here, too. When we see savings and we can quantify them, we're certainly in for that, but it's a little early to know whether or not we have dollars and cents savings that are transferrable to the general census of 1990.

Senator COCHRAN. Do you have an estimate that you can give us of the total cost of the pretest here in Mississippi?

Mr. KEANE. Who knows the budget? You know Pete Boupane, who's assistant director for demographic censuses. Who can provide that for the record? John? If that information is not available—Pete estimates about $1½ million.

Senator COCHRAN. 1½ million?

What is the budget, as matter of curiosity, if you know, for the 1990 census? Do we have a figure?

Mr. KEANE. Without going into a lot of detail and all the assumptions, it's essentially in the $2 billion area. I won't go into it in detail, but it depends a lot on the inflation rate that we now have because people cost us such a big hunk. It also depends on the number of households and the composition of those households.

Senator COCHRAN. I understand that one benefit to this region, other than the fact that there were lot of jobs created by this activity, is that there will be information made available to counties and cities as to how many people actually live there now; is that correct?

Mr. KEANE. That's correct. We first want to make sure that we followed the procedures laid out, that we got a quality count and, for instance, the local areas will be involved in a local review, but they get a preliminary estimate and a chance to react to that. Say, "Why, this looks good. This squares with what we have in our estimates." And so that when we do put that out, we can all be assured that it is an accurate count.

Senator COCHRAN. I know that Mr. DeBerry has already described some of the effort to involve the community leaders, churches, organizations, schools, and news media to help spread the word that this is something that's going on and that people ought to participate in it. Would you say that the reaction was one of cooperation, or did you run into any resistance of the people who said, for instance, they didn't want to fool with this, or they weren't going to cooperate? What was your impression of the reaction you got from people when you met them?

Mr. DEBERRY. Well, Mr. Chairman, we can look at this from two perspectives: One being that we did nothing new. Two, we just expanded quite a bit on that which we had been doing. In 1980, we had a large increase of organization overlapping from the 1970's where we were able to go in to the local leadership and identify those local leaders and hopefully enlist their support. Those organizations still exist but in fewer number. Therefore, we now have to go out and identify the persons as well as the individual leaders from nontraditional organizations. We tried to do this by utilizing the entire scope. First of all, we utilized the media to accentuate what we were trying to do. The schools and churches, we feel are a very, very integral part of the community in which people live, and

therefore we tried to get these individuals involved. We also tried to utilize the media through an educational approach. In the press we bring them information that's most of the time is nonnewsworthy, but we were trying to get to the community by looking at three major factors in the community which is very significant. One is fear, apathy, and education or the lack thereof. So many folks we identified through the focus groups discussion attempted to identify the problems of why they might not fill out the questionnaire.

There were three things that kept popping up: (1) fear of governmental agencies taking away benefits that we have; or (2) why do we have to take a census every 10 years, and (3) in some instances, what do we do in between those 10 years? Apathy thereby originates from those aforementioned concerns. To help cope with those fears this time around, we utilized local personalities to produce public service announcements for rival communities and we received a greater response than any other time. In fact, one of the witnesses today is Walter Gardner, who did a PSA for us. I think folks really saw that as a significant impact in seeing one of their own telling them to fill out the questionnaire, who otherwise probably would not have done so.

So by involving the overall scope, putting that in a nontraditional standpoint in trying to tie everyone under one umbrella; the ongoing media, but not exhausting the media, to not withhold the information through education, enabled us to get a better response.

Senator COCHRAN. Ms. Mann, you mentioned that at the peak of the activity, there were over 500 people involved. How many people are now involved, and what are they doing? If the count has already been completed as far as mail-in questionnaires are concerned, what is going on now?

Ms. MANN. We have approximately 100 people working now. That's in the field and in the office. We're into field followup phase II, which is vacant/delete. Everything that we determined either to be vacant or to be deleted, we're going out checking again. If the house is now occupied, then we're filling out a questionnaire for that household.

Senator COCHRAN. How long will this take, and when will it all be wrapped up and tied up with a ribbon?

Ms. MANN. We expect that by the end of this week we will be finished with phase II of the followup. Next week we'll start block split, which is another couple of weeks. Then in August, mid-August, we'll do postcensus local review. We anticipate that by the end of August we'll be finished.

Senator COCHRAN. When do the local officials get an opportunity to review the results, for you to have them react as to whether or not they think this is accurate?

Ms. MANN. I believe the date for that is July 28. It's right at the end of July. And they will have 10 days to review our counts and to produce any hard evidence, as we call it. At that point, we go out and recanvass anything that their figures differ.

Senator COCHRAN. Do you have any impression, Mr. Driskell, about how the process or procedure can be improved as far as trying to get as much response by mail as possible to save the Government money in having to do less door-to-door canvassing?

Mr. DRISKELL. Well, our carriers are out there every day, and seeing us deliver the questionnaires, then they realize it's part of an important thing they have to do. And we had a real good test. Many problems that we didn't realize that were out there came up and we had to solve them, and we just overall had a real good census test, and hope that we can save the Census Department and the Government money by doing this test.

Senator COCHRAN. Dr. Keane, what is your overall reaction to the test here in Mississippi? How would you describe it?

Mr. KEANE. I would describe it as I have before: Overall, very successful. But it does not make us a smug institution. That is, we are certainly looking for help. For instance, this morning all of us met with the enumerators and discussed ways to improve the system. For example, our school project. Some of the superintendents and principals apparently knew of it and pushed it, and therefore, those children helped their parents to expect and cooperate with the census; and yet others didn't. We need a followup on that.

The incentive values, that a person would have a quota for satisfactorily completing the questionnaires and then do more and he would be monetarily rewarded, worked well, so we want to highly capitalize that. And just to give you an idea that was not a very pertinent point—or was a very pertinent point—as to how we get cooperation especially in the rural areas, the idea was simply let the country stores know. Perhaps put up a poster. But that's a focal point. They don't watch television and they don't subscribe to anything, they may have to have a billboard or poster in sight. So it's not being smug, being sensitive to wherever there's a good idea, it could be incorporated.

And, finally, to get the kind of cooperation, and I don't know how we can Xerox it here and make it a model elsewhere. But the people I mentioned, and others who are not here; Chief Martin, who will be testifying shortly, from the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. He was a major help in education.

It kind of reminds me of the high Mayor Bradley was on in Los Angeles after the 1984 Olympics, because behind the success of the Olympics he saw this as bringing that community together, and we can use the census in our Bicentennial celebration in 1990. This seems to be the week for selling celebrations but we've got one coming up, the national celebration, and we can bring the citizens—or rather the residents really since we count the residents—the residents together in a national celebration as one individual calling.

So those are my summary observations. And a second thank you to you for holding the hearing and holding it here on site, which does immeasurable value, beyond even what you may know, to the people—the 580 people—who have worked and are now working in the census.

Senator COCHRAN. Well, I'm proud of the people who have been involved in the census activity, the project, the effort to test the questionnaires, the procedure, and I think they've done an excellent job, too. I'm proud of them, and for the people who responded as well to the requests to fill out questionnaires and send them in and cooperate with the officials of the Census Bureau. I think Mis-

sissippi has done itself proud, as we say down here. So I'm proud of that.

Thank you for being here and being a part of this panel and helping make this hearing a success. We appreciate your cooperation. Thank you for coming.

Our next panel of witnesses includes Mayor Jimmy Kemp of the city of Meridian and Ivory Lyles of Neshoba County who is the Mississippi Cooperative Extension Agent in Neshoba County, Philadelphia, and a member of the Neshoba County Complete Count Committee. Local officials were involved, as I understand it, throughout the region in the census process.

We appreciate both Mayor Kemp and Mr. Lyles being here today to discuss the involvement of local officials and local committees in promoting the census and helping make it a success.

Mayor Kemp, let's start with you. Any comments?

TESTIMONY OF JIMMY KEMP, MAYOR, MERIDIAN, MS;[4] AND IVORY LYLES, COUNTY AGENT, MISSISSIPPI COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE, PHILADELPHIA, MS[5]

Mr. KEMP. First of all, Senator, let me tell you we want to welcome you and your staff to our fair city. We feel very fortunate, the city council and I. We had Congressman Montgomery in our meeting this morning, and now we're getting you this afternoon.

Senator COCHRAN. You're getting overloaded with these things.

Mr. KEMP. We appreciate the opportunity.

And before I go any further, let me tell you that there are some other folks that I need to thank as far as our people are concerned here. Bridget Clayton, would you stand, Bridget? She's really the specialist from our Community Development Department that did most of the work. We've also got Don Farrar out there somewhere. That's Don, who heads up our Department of Community Development. And Larry Frazier; that's Larry back behind back there. These folks have done a super job in our department.

We want to also welcome Dr. Keane and his staff here, Ms. Mann and the other folks. Mr. DeBerry we have gotten to know very well since he has been here, and we want to tell you that they did a super job, and we appreciate all the work on their part.

Then there's a few questions that I would first of all like to tell you that we feel like we've answered, at least to our satisfaction.

You might ask the question: How did the city of Meridian—and I think you already have—promote the 1986 test census?

Our answer to that is: As a joint effort to promote the 1986 test census, the city of Meridian, town of Marion, and Lauderdale County appointed 11 local citizens to serve on the 1986 Test Census Complete Count Committee.

The publicity and community outreach objectives as stated in the 1986 Census of East Central Mississippi Executive Briefing of Governmental Officials were fulfilled by this census committee in cooperation with the local census office staff.

With the assistance of Mr. Willie DeBerry, who served the U.S. Census Bureau as the local census outreach specialist, and the

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[4] See p. 44 for Mayor Kemp's prepared statement.

[5] See p. 49 for Mrs. Lyles' prepared statement.

Complete Count Committee, a mass media promotion campaign was established in support of the 1986 test census.

TV, radio, and print media messages were disseminated promoting the census throughout the city and county to ensure that all local citizens were aware of the test census. Press releases, news and feature stories, posters, flyers, and speeches to civic groups, educational and religious organizations were some of the means that were utilized by Mr. DeBerry and this committee to promote the test census.

I don't think I've ever seen anything here that has gotten a much better response of all the whole entire community. The private sector pitched in, the media pitched in, the elected officials from the county as well as the town of Marion, which is also an incorporated area in our city, they all pitched in. One of the reasons why it was so important to us, and that will bring me to the next question, and the next answer is:

Just how important is an accurate count from a census to the city of Meridian? And we feel like we can tell you part of the reason why we want to have an accurate count.

Meridian is classified as a nonentitlement small city with a population of 46,577 people. We have a great desire to obtain an accurate census count to obtain entitlement status with a population of 50,000 or more.

If an accurate count reveals that the city has obtained entitlement status, we would receive annual CDBG funding and would not have to compete for discretionary grants with other small cities.

With entitlement status, the city would be able to implement community development and housing programs such as residential, street improvements, recreational facilities, and demolition of substandard structures and sites for new construction to attract new development and jobs. Overall, the funds will provide resources to produce substantial long-term improvements in our city.

As has been expressed to the local census office manager and staff, we would like very much to reach 50,000 people or more in population. We've got a letter that's attached to our remarks here that we've told them just that.

We were asked the question: How was the 1986 test census received by local residents?

If the telephone calls which were received by the city's Community Development Department are any indication as to the level of the community participation and cooperation generated during this census, then the city of Meridian should obtain its desired goal as a result of this census.

Several concerned citizens contacted the city on either how to obtain a census form, the willingness to replace a lost census form, or to inquire about jobs with the local census office.

The benefits of jobs, updated census data, increased public awareness and understanding of programs using census data and being a part of the Bicentennial Census planning process have all been received with gratitude by the local residents.

We hope that since the promotion of the census was so outstanding that it had a positive effect upon the local community participation which will be reflected in the 1986 post census counts.

What's my opinion on the Test Census Local Review Program? By allowing the city to see the census counts twice: once before the census questionnaires were mailed—precensus local review—and once after the enumeration has been completed—post census local review—will contribute to a more accurate census count for the city.

This program gives the city government an opportunity to actively participate in the test census and to identify any discrepancies in the counts of the Census Bureau.

In short, we feel like, Senator, that these folks have done a super job. We feel like our community is going to benefit as a result of our being picked here in this particular area of east central Mississippi to have the census, or precensus conducted.

I've got two other gentlemen here that I saw, Mr. Howard Williams? Would you stand, Mr. Williams? He's one of our council that abandoned me and let me come up here by myself. Mr. Williams is on our city council. Mr. Thomas, Mr. George Thomas—George, would you stand? He's also a member of our city council. Do we have any of the others here? So you can direct questions to them now if you get ready.

Senator COCHRAN. Thank you, Mayor, very much.

Mr. Lyles, we appreciate your being here from over in Neshoba County where you served on the county's Complete Count Committee. Tell us about the committee and what your observations were about the census.

Mr. LYLES. I want to thank you for allowing me this opportunity to come to testify before the Committee on Governmental Affairs, and the Subcommittee on Energy, Nuclear Proliferation, and Government Processes.

Working with the Neshoba Board of Supervisors as their liason person, I would like to address the following as it relates to the 1986 census of east central Mississippi on questionnaire design and content, delivery data and collection methods, publicity, community outreach techniques and community cooperation and participation.

Under questionnaire design and content, I find very few things that are not suitable or that the county does not agree with. One thing that we did not agree with though was the placing of college-enrolled students. I think that students away in college and universities should be counted in their home county rather than where the college is located because those people are citizens of their county; their parents are working in that county and voting from that community, paying taxes in that community; putting back into that community; and I don't think the places where the university is located should reap the benefit of those extra 10 or 15,000 people living in places like from all over the counties.

The second point of the questionnaire design and content that we struggled with is the production of unemployment data. In my opinion, the data collected by the Bureau is not of sufficient quality. Since the census is going to be taken anyway as mandated by law, then we should go a little bit more—gather a little bit better information on quality and quantity for the local government officials to use in preparing and proving information for new industry and so forth. Also education goes hand in hand with unemploy-

ment. Therefore, more emphasis should be used on obtaining type of education available and developing other information to report to local government officials.

Delivery data and collection methods—I found that the Census Bureau did an outstanding job in this, and the county was well pleased. This allowed them to have—they used local people in delivering the questionnaires along with the Postal Service, which I think was of real good quality. We found that the combination of postal delivery and census takers should have given some indication as to what would be best for the 1990 census.

Their followup campaign in Neshoba County was identified at our last briefing. We had a real high return rate, which is evident of the type of people that we have in Neshoba County. This was a very high rate in my opinion in Neshoba County, and I think the 1990 census will be of a high rate also.

The mass media campaign was very good. We saw several advertisements in the local paper and on the local radio stations, and on the Meridian TV station. We also, the local count committee, helped set up and arrange several broadcasts of the local radio station and other media campaigns. That involved the key community leaders, and I think any time you involve the key community leaders that's respected by the local clientele, you're going to reach a large percentage of the people in that community. From what I've seen and what I believe, all segments of the population were involved in getting the message across about the census in Neshoba County. The Census Bureau did an outstanding job of reaching all segments of the population in the county, and overall, the Neshoba County board and officials have so far been real pleased with the efforts of the Census Bureau, and we look forward to receiving the whole census count.

Senator COCHRAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Lyles. I understand that local officials were given copies of housing units—in numerous counties—totals of housing units for review to see whether or not all the housing units were being identified by the census takers, and opportunity was also given for response.

Did either one of you—your city or county—take advantage of this opportunity to review the housing counts, or did you find any errors in those?

Mr. LYLES. We've looked at the housing counts. They were sent to us in Neshoba County, and previewed it with the local officials and the Complete Count Committee, and at the time we didn't find any errors. Since that time we've been gathering data to prepare a postcount, which is more important to us at this time, because we are interested in getting an accurate count of Neshoba County, and not only getting an accurate count of the county, but dividing the city and the county since there's only one city located within the county.

Senator COCHRAN. Mayor Kemp.

Mr. KEMP. We, Senator, turned it over to the community development department but we did have some of it that we went over with them, but basically, most of it I'd like to say was in line pretty well with what we felt about it. We did look at some areas that were—the staff were very good about doing anything that we'd like for them to do as far as reviewing the whole works.

Before we completely get away from it, I would like to also agree with Mr. Lyles concerning college students. It's a little different in the Deep South where your colleges in reality are located in rural areas and the kids are staying in dormitories. And that's the case when the kids go off here and go to Mississippi State or Ole Miss, they're principally in dormitories there on the campus. I see that as a problem and I see that probably as being wrong. The kids are still supported by their parents here; they still regard their home address as here in the county that they're in. And I see that as a little different than some of our larger Northeastern cities and States where we see a kid go off to school and wind up staying there, you know, or living off campus and this sort of thing. That doesn't happen in Mississippi, and I think that possibly it's wrong insofar as the census count is concerned. Plus the fact a big part of our kids are home on the weekends. Home is still in Meridian, MS. And I think maybe we need to take that into consideration somewhat.

Senator COCHRAN. When the count proceeds through the month of July as I understand it, you will be given a copy and have an opportunity to react to that.

Mr. KEMP. That's true.

Senator COCHRAN. Do you have an office or a person whom you have designated as having responsibility to review those figures and make the reaction that you are being given the opportunity to make?

Mr. KEMP. Senator, one of the most important things to us in Meridian, MS, at the present time is to obtain that maximum number of 50,000 people.

Senator COCHRAN. You may need to get into the recruiting business.

Mr. KEMP. We want to be a standard metropolitan statistical area. And as a result, I can assure you that the community development staff of this city had best not let us miss anybody.

Senator COCHRAN. That sounds like an order, doesn't it?

Mr. KEMP. We got it.

Senator COCHRAN. Mr. Lyles.

Mr. LYLES. We have in place in Neshoba County a local review committee. I can't remember the total number of it. But it's supposed to be representative of the minority makeup of the community, all citizens of the population of the county. They will sit down with the local elected officials and go over the complete count, maybe not house—block by block—but we will do a thorough job. We will compare statistical data or whatever data we get on hand to see if these things are going to match up. Because we too are looking for an accurate count in Neshoba County. We're not going to reach 50,000, but we want an accurate count. And we don't want the city of Philadelphia taking any of the people out of the county saying they're in the city.

Mr. KEMP. If we don't reach 50,000, Senator, we're going to take some out of Lauderdale County.

Senator COCHRAN. This is going to get really interesting before it's over. I didn't know what we were getting into when I decided to have this hearing in the area, but I'm sure Dr. Keane and his staff are hearing everything that you're saying.

Mr. KEMP. The point that we want to be sure that he has got Lauderdale County correctly counted also so we'll know where to get the remainder that we need.

Senator COCHRAN. Well, there's no question but the results of this will have a tremendous impact——

Mr. KEMP. Sure.

Senator COCHRAN [continuing]. On local communities. Federal and State dollars are allocated on the basis of data that will be obtained as a result of the census. So it really is an important exercise. It's really dollars and cents. It makes a lot of difference to the people of this area.

I think that your committees have just done a wonderful job in promoting this census and explaining to everybody how important it is to respond and cooperate, to be counted.

In your observations so far of the process of procedures, do you have any recommendations that you would like to make formally to the Census Bureau to improve the taking of the census or to enhance the public support of the census?

Mr. LYLES. The mass media campaign in the taking of the census, they did an outstanding job in Neshoba County, as well as in Newton County. They were local people in the area they were working in. A lot of people where they were going in door-to-door followup knew them, and we had no problems in those areas.

Senator COCHRAN. That's probably very important too, isn't it? Using the local people will build confidence that this is not somebody from Washington down here snooping around to see who is doing what.

Mr. LYLES. Local people, yes, sir. They're easy to get upset and question the U.S. Government, and if they have someone there they can identify with, you eliminate a lot of that fear.

Senator COCHRAN. What about you, Mayor?

Mr. KEMP. By and large, Senator, we don't see a great deal to be changed one way or the other. We think that the folks did a super job as far as work that they've done. I don't know of anything we could have recommended that wouldn't maybe even complicate the matter even more.

We do appreciate being selected as one of the areas in the United States, one of the two. It is going to be a benefit to us. It has already been a benefit to us simply because of the fact that we had that many people employed. And the full term of this is going to be something for us all to be real proud of, I think.

Senator COCHRAN. I appreciate your being here and thank you again for participating and serving in the capacity that you have.

Our final panel of witnesses includes three individuals: Jack Rush, who is director of communications of the Meridian Chamber of Commerce; Phillip Martin, who is chief of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, and Walter Gardner, who is president of the Newton Community Improvement Corp.

We are very pleased to have these gentlemen to be witnesses at our hearing. They are private citizens in the communities who have volunteered their efforts and time to help make this census test a success. The participation and cooperation of individual citizens have made it possible for us to achieve the success that we

have seen here in this part of the State, and they'll help make the 1990 census more complete and accurate.

Let's start with Jack Rush, who is with the Meridian Chamber of Commerce. Are there any comments that you might have, Jack, about the census and your role in it?

TESTIMONY OF JACK RUSH, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS, MERIDIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE;[6] PHILLIP MARTIN, CHIEF, MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS, PHILADELPHIA, MS;[7] AND WALTER GARDNER, PRESIDENT, NEWTON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT CORP., NEWTON, MS[8]

Mr. RUSH. OK. I would also like to thank you for letting me be here today.

My affiliation with the 1986 test census was as chairman of the Complete Count Committee for Lauderdale County, which in a lot of ways was a surprise to me. Probably being one of the younger—or the youngest—person on the committee itself, I felt pretty honored to be able to serve in that capacity as chairman. And I saw the need, as the mayor has plainly stated, that we did need a good complete count, and we needed to get all the citizens involved and make them aware of what the Bureau of Census was trying to do.

Willie DeBerry has met with the Complete Count Committee, and informed me, and the committee as a whole, on what our responsibilities were. He also sat down with me personally and supplied me with plenty of information to use as reference when trying to inform and educate the local citizens.

On the committee there were members of the local media that were very helpful in all the publicity: TV, radio, and newspaper. We did cover a few things, the committee, I felt like which were very beneficial to the area. We got out a letter to over 200 clubs and organizations in the Meridian area informing them about the census and offering our services to inform them further. And as a result of that letter, we did get a lot of requests to Mr. DeBerry and myself. Both of us did some speaking at various clubs and organizations, lunch meetings, which I felt we generated a lot of questions at these meetings as people were kind of curious, and I guess fear of not really knowing what the census was all about. And this seemed to ease their minds a little bit, and that way we reached out to a lot more people. A lot of people may not read the paper every day or listen to the radio or watch the news, but I feel like we reached out to quite a few people through that way. And Mr. DeBerry was most helpful in supplying information to our committee.

Senator COCHRAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Rush, for your presentation.

Phillip Martin, chief of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.

Mr. MARTIN. Thank you, Senator. It's good to see you again.

I'd like to begin by saying that my statement will be short. We were happy to be selected as part of the survey because I was one of those that complained about the 1980 census, complained strong-

[6] See p. 50 for Mr. Rush's prepared statement.
[7] See p. 51 for Mr. Martin's prepared statement.
[8] See p. 53 for Mr. Gardner's prepared statement.

ly because I felt that the survey was inaccurate. And so in order to kind of prove that, in 1982, we conducted our own survey. And we went to Dr. Fortune at Virginia Polytechnic Institute, who is an authority on conducting surveys. We got him to help us develop a valid survey instrument, and we conducted it in a scientific way through the procedure that they set up. And we found out that we were right; there was a gross difference in our survey as compared to 1980. So this had also another effect on us. We could not use that census statement as a planning tool. It also affected our dollars as it was connected—the population was connected—to the amount of money that we received through the Revenue Service, revenue sharing, and some other programs. So that had deprived us of several thousand dollars.

Although we reserve judgment on this particualr census, over and all, in general, I think it was a good one. From early on, the census department contacted me at the tribe, telling us that they would like to do the survey and that they would like to have our cooperation. And so readily we took up the challenge. And I assigned some people on my staff to work with the census people, both from the national level as well as the local people who were charged with the responsibility. And they tell me that this survey is a lot better, or like day and night, as compared to 1980. So I feel that a good job has been done.

Now, about any recommendations, probably it would be these, and I raise these questions with them. I said, "What is it that we could recommend that might improve the 1990 census taking?"

And, of course, the first one was, there needs to be additional effort training of local officials in the details of administration of the census, both Indian and non-Indian local officials. I guess the officials weren't that informed because of a lot of questions were raised to them which they could not answer immediately so they had to go and do some research themselves.

Second, the enumeration districts need to be congruent with tribal trustlands. The district used this spring overlapped trust and nontrustlands; and we felt that it would be easier to keep track of the reservation residents if their tracts were separate.

Then, third, we would advise that for Indian areas, the Census Bureau be empowered to hire directly its Indian enumerators, rather than having to recruit through the employment services. Although the employment service did a good job, we feel that we know the people that can do this, probably more and better qualified to do this, because people who applied back through the employment services were those people who were most likely to be unemployed, so they were having a hard time getting jobs so there was another job for them. But I think it's important to have people who are qualified to go into the homes to get these facts that a good census needs.

And then the last would be, the census forms themselves. I happened to fill out the short form. I received a short form, and I opened it up and looked at it, and they told me it was a short form, and I thought I had the wrong form. But, anyway, it's difficult. I let that lay around almost past the time. But later on, I asked them, "What about the long form? How long is it?" And they said, "It's three or four times longer than the short form." So I think

probably—I know there's a good reason to have these forms that they have them—but maybe another review that needs to be made to make it shorter and more right to the point.

So I guess those would be my recommendations, and we are glad to be chosen to be a part of it, and we feel that this study, this census this time, will be more accurate than it was the last time.

Thank you.

Senator COCHRAN. Thank you very much, Chief Martin. We appreciate your being here very much.

Mr. Gardner.

Mr. GARDNER. Right.

Senator COCHRAN. We understand that you were very instrumental in helping to promote participation in the census, taping a special message that was played on the radio, according to the statement of Mr. DeBerry, and we would like to hear from you now.

Mr. GARDNER. Thank you, Senator. First, I'd like to thank you for the privilege to participate, and I'd like to thank Mr. DeBerry for recommending my input.

Let me just identify the organization, Newton Improvement and Development. We are a countywide organization that's home office is in Newton with emphasis directed on general improvement, and economic improvement in particular.

Just before I address that specific reference you made, I'd just like to point out that after the 1980 census, there was a great deal of publicity given to the contingent there was another minority group that was about to replace the black minority group as the No. 1 in terms of numbers. And I have been involved in a number of organizations, statewide, nationwide. We were beginning to get a little concerned about that. The problem might, in fact, be an undercount. We've got no problem with the increased numbers of others, but we want to make certain that the count is accurate, and the information assimilated is correct.

From the perspective of what we are able to do in Newton County, what I'd like to do now is just read a prepared statement and kind of generalize on that as we need to.

Basing my assessment on previous census activity in our area, it is my opinion that the 1986 census count in the east central Mississippi area was the best organized and most thorough of recent undertakings. I believe every grassroot or community-based organization was tapped by the organizers for input and involvement. This involvement, I believe, lessened the amount of the usual apprehension many citizens experience when personal information is being sought.

Although the organization which I am currently president of is not a minority organization—quote-unquote—by design, it does have a higher number of black members than white. This being so, we were able to have forums during our regular and special meetings to help blacks understand the census activity, as well as feel more comfortable with the whole process. We believe that such activities led to a higher percentage of participation and with more accurate information.

We were able to participate, as was earlier stated by Senator Cochran, by doing promos through local media. And we believe that those promos assisted in giving a sense of comfort to those per-

sons who were in the listening area; and as a result of that, we think they participated a little more fully than otherwise would have been the case.

In addition to that too, we did have, as I stated, the forums in not only the special-called meetings but in our regular meetings that we continued to promote the idea and concept of the test that was going on. Also materials that were given us by Mr. DeBerry were widely distributed, and we made that a priority up to and among the various members in the organization to see that those were distributed throughout the county.

Finally, we'd like to say that we want to thank Mr. DeBerry and the Bureau officials for the professional way in which they led the effort for the good count. In the long run, we too believe that accurate information will benefit our area.

And I'd just like to mention, besides these folks have observed it too, that concerning the campaign comparison that you asked about earlier in the Los Angeles area, I believe with Mr. Willie DeBerry in that area, it would have scored a lot better. When that guy gets through stroking your ego, you can't say no to whatever he wants done.

Thank you, sir.

Senator COCHRAN. Thank you, Mr. Gardner, for your presentation.

I think that you three gentlemen being here illustrates why this was a success. Leaders like you in the community are essential to ensure a full participation on the part of our citizens, and so I think that you are to be commended for taking a role, playing a part in this effort. And that's not just stroking your ego either. I really believe that. I really do believe it, and I mean it.

The observations you made, I think, will be very helpful. I don't know how they're going to shorten the form, Chief, but I think that's a good suggestion. You could just get worn out sometimes looking at some of these forms before you even start working on it.

Mr. MARTIN. I think some people would have difficulty with it.

Senator COCHRAN. How does a person who can't read or write deal with that? What would they do? Weren't there walk-in assistance centers or an office that——

Mr. RUSH. It was well publicized if they had trouble—on the radio, on television—if they had trouble, there was a number they could call for assistance and an enumerator would be sent out. And so we tried to make people aware of that, too, through our committee. But I think it was well publicized and the media assisted, if they needed help, it was available.

Senator COCHRAN. There was a walk-in assistance center set up at the reservation for people to come in and get assistance if they needed it or wanted it. Did anybody take advantage of that? Do you know?

Mr. MARTIN. I'm sure a lot of them did. Yes, sir.

Senator COCHRAN. But these radio promotional efforts were effective too, in your judgment, Mr. Gardner?

Mr. GARDNER. Yes, sir, they were, Senator. I think that they probably played a very superb role in the census confidence, in the person in the listening area were able to generalize.

Senator COCHRAN. They could identify with you. Whether in Newton County or not, the people who heard you on the radio knew you were a local person, and who saw Susan Akin on the billboard and heard a television public service announcement, they knew the person they were hearing was a local person?

Mr. GARDNER. Exactly.

Senator COCHRAN. Not just somebody from way off coming into Newton. That was a big help, you think?

Mr. GARDNER. Yes, sir, I think so. I'd like to add that, you know, as far as contact could be improved upon, I don't see any way except continue that activity. The biggest problem in particular is, of course, the combination of apathy and fear. I think that those kind of promos have eradicated both.

Senator COCHRAN. I think this has been an excellent and beneficial exercise for the entire region of the State and I think it will certainly help us, as the chief observed, get a more accurate count of the citizens and other residents who really do live here; and maybe, if what we hope is true, may make us qualify for additional funding that we might not have otherwise been able to obtain, and that will really pay off for our area.

Let me conclude by thanking you and all the other witnesses who have appeared at our hearing. And I want to express the appreciation of our subcommittee to the city for making these facilities available to us and for the cooperation that our subcommittee staff has received in preparing for the hearing and in conducting the hearing. We appreciate that very much, Mayor, the board, and members of the staff of the city who have been very helpful.

Let me also recognize the valuable contribution to the hearing that has been made by members of our committee staff: June Walton and James Lofton, who are both here. Carrie Laird of my personal staff in my Jackson office is also here. They all have played a very important and essential role in the conduct of the hearing.

To Dr. Keane and members of the staff from Washington and those who were employed here, we thank all of you for helping make this a successful exercise and beneficial hearing.

Our subcommittee is going to continue to monitor the preparations for the 1990 census, the pretesting in the various regions of the country and the development of new techniques to get full participation of the people in the United States in the census process. It's not only essential for the correct apportionment of the seats in the House of Representatives in the Congress, but also for many other purposes. It's essential that we all get counted and that we make the census as accurate as possible. What we're trying to do as a committee of the Congress is to help ensure that the accurate amount of the funding is available that is needed, that it's an efficient process, it doesn't waste money, and that it's done right, and that's what this is all about.

We appreciate everybody's cooperation.

With that, the subcommittee is adjourned.

[Whereupon the subcommittee adjourned, to reconvene at the call of the Chair.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

STATEMENT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
John G. Keane
Before the Subcommittee on Energy, Nuclear Proliferation,
and Government Processes
Committee on Governmental Affairs
U.S. Senate
July 1, 1986

Introduction

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate this opportunity to brief the Subcommittee on the 1986 Census of East Central Mississippi. The census includes Attala, Jasper, Kemper, Lauderdale, Leake, Neshoba, Newton and Winston Counties. And we included a small part of Jones County so that we could cover the entire Choctaw Indian Reservation. In 1980, this area included about 77,000 housing units and 207,000 people. Before I discuss some of the specific objectives we are testing here in Mississippi, I will summarize where we are at this time and why we believe the census here has been a success.

Census Day for the 1986 Census of East Central Mississippi was March 16. We asked respondents to mail back their questionnaires to the collection and processing office here in Meridian on Census Day or as soon thereafter as possible. We were very encouraged by the higher-than-expected mail-response rate from the residents of the test area. In a census, the higher the mail-response rate, the fewer housing units enumerators have to visit. That means savings in money and in time to complete the census. As of April 8, when nonresponse followup began, we had received questionnaires for about 60 percent of the housing units on our address control lists. We had estimated the mail-response rate would be about 55 percent. While we would expect a higher response rate for this area in 1990 when we will have the benefit of a national promotional campaign, we believe the response rate achieved in the test census was quite good.

This high mail-response rate was due in large part to the cooperation of the residents here and to the very successful promotional campaign we had here. The campaign included television, radio, and newspaper advertising, brochures, buttons, posters, bumper stickers, billboards, and so forth. Local media, both print and electronic, cooperated in airing our census message. This message, which emphasized the importance and confidentiality of the census, was enhanced by endorsements and words of encouragement from several key officials and personages who appeared in public service announcements for us. In this regard, I especially want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving your valuable time to help in the effort of encouraging public support for the census. I also want to acknowledge the great support and efforts of Congressman G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery, Congressman Webb Franklin, and Dr. Aaron Henry, President of the Mississippi NAACP, all of whom appeared in broadcast public service messages for us. And, of course, we are especially

grateful to Miss America, Susan Akin of Meridian, who lent her grace, beauty, and intelligence to the census promotional effort. Miss Akin taped six television and radio messages for us and appeared in our billboard advertising. Having the census endorsed by such prominent individuals who are known and respected by the local population was a priceless asset for us in our promotional campaign.

I also wish to thank the newspapers and radio and television stations in Meridian and throughout the census area for providing free space and time in support of the census. Their efforts will be a guide for us to obtain media cooperation for the 1990 census.

Each county in the test area established Complete Count Committees to undertake local activities to supplement the census promotion campaign. These committees were joint undertakings between the counties and a major town or city in each county. We asked local communities to establish such committees in 1980 (more than 4,000 did so) and we will ask again in 1990. They are an important source of local support for the census.

Schools in several communities participated in our school project. We prepared and sent to each school in the test area teaching materials to be used in the classroom. These materials were designed to teach students about the history and importance of the census and how to use census data. One goal of this project is to have students share their awareness and knowledge of the census with their families. We are particularly appreciative of the assistance provided by Dr. Richard Boyd, State Superintendant of Education; Ms. Nancy Brown of his staff; and Dr. Leah Englehardt of Mississippi State University who aided in developing, reviewing, and notifying other education officials about the materials. We also established numerous contacts with local religious, community, and service organizations who lent their support to the census effort.

Mr. Chairman, public cooperation and support is essential to the conduct of a successful census. Without a high level of public support and willingness to cooperate with the mail census, our job is made much harder and we must spend more time and money to complete the census. In 1990, we will ask the Advertising Council to conduct a full-scale public service advertising campaign to promote the 1990 census. If the 1980 census experience is any indication, it will be a huge success. But in 1990, as in 1980, we will need the support of key individuals and local initiatives to supplement the national campaign. Here in the 1986 Census of East Central Mississippi, you've set a standard for how that can be done.

Now, I will briefly discuss what happened after Census Day. About 3 weeks after Census Day, we began to visit door-to-door to complete questionnaires for those housing units for which questionnaires had not been returned by mail. This operation, which we call nonresponse followup, is one of the most difficult and challenging parts of census-taking. The operation requires a large number of enumerators.

It must be completed in a relatively tight timeframe to prevent delays in subsequent operations. And, even though the overwhelming majority of nonrespondents are cooperative, it is often hard to find people at home and there is sometimes a considerable amount of travel involved--some of it to out-of-the-way places.

One of the major successes we had in the census here was completing nonresponse followup in 3 weeks, instead of the scheduled 4 weeks. Martha Mann, our collection and processing office manager, and her entire staff should be congratulated for a job well done. We have been very impressed with the temporary employees we have been able to hire here.

The collection and processing office staff has performed at a high level of quality. They have consistently completed the operations on time or ahead of schedule, and in the nonresponse followup operation, the staff exceeded expected production rates.

We also credit new procedures we instituted for administering and controlling the enumeration with contributing to the early completion of followup. We reduced the number of enumerators that each crew leader must supervise from 10 to 8, tightened the review of incoming work, and established daily reporting of cost and progress. We also set incentive payments for the completion of a certain number of followup cases. We are currently evaluating the effect of these payments.

Now, we are in the final stages of completing the field work. This includes various coverage checks and personal visits to get additional information on some questionnaires. In late July or early August, we will send preliminary counts to local officials in the post-census phase of local review. The Local Review Program gives local officials an opportunity to review preliminary census counts before the collection office closes. Local officials will compare the census counts to their own records and if they have evidence of major discrepancies between our counts and theirs, we would perform an additional field canvass for the area in question. The pre-census phase of local review took place in December and January.

Although the census here was basically a success, we did encounter some problems and I will mention a couple. We expect to have problems in a test census and look forward to learning from them so we can make corrections. We learned for instance, that we need to improve liaison and communications between ourselves, the U.S. Postal Service, and the vendors that print questionnaires, reminder cards, and so forth. Much of this was due to the fact that, for the first time, we were testing new contracting procedures and technology for printing questionnaires. We had some early delivery of mail reminder cards and a few questionnaires. We could deal with that in a small-scale test census, but must work to avoid it in the nationwide census.

This was the first time we tested some of our new automated systems (including off-the-shelf micro computers in a decentralized location) that are being developed for implementation in 1990. There were bugs in some of this software, which affected our management information system and address control file. We were not able to get information on mail-response rates from our automated management information system and had to rely on hand tallies, instead. We also experienced difficulty in adding addresses to our automated address control file during update operations. We corrected these problems and will make sure similar problems do not occur in 1990.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I will discuss the objectives of the 1986 Census of East Central Mississippi and several of the specific issues we tested.

Objectives of the 1986 Census

The 1986 Census of East Central Mississippi is one of several test censuses we are conducting for the 1990 census. The test censuses are laboratories for actually trying out, under census-like conditions, different options and approaches that have surfaced in our internal review and consultation with with data users.

In 1984 we conducted a test of procedures for compiling census address lists in both urban and rural areas. We conducted tests of census procedures and automation in 1985 in Jersey City, New Jersey, and Tampa, Florida. This year, in addition to the test census in East Central Mississippi, we are conducting a census in Central Los Angeles County, California. We are also conducting a national test of questionnaire content items this year. We will hold an additional test in North Central North Dakota in 1987; this is an area where we will use primarily the door-to-door census technique in 1990.

Then, in 1988, we will conduct a full dress rehearsal for the 1990 census. We recently announced that our dress rehearsal sites will be the city of St. Louis, several counties in Missouri, and several counties in Washington State. We intend to make the dress rehearsal a true dry run of census procedures for 1990. We do not want to make many changes after the dress rehearsal, only fine-tune the census process based on dress rehearsal results.

We began to identify our objectives for the 1986 test censuses in 1984. Because of the complexity and diversity of our country and the need for different procedures and approaches in different areas, we wanted to have both urban and rural sites. For the rural site, we wanted an area of about 200,000 people--a size big enough to give a true test of our automation systems. We also wanted the site to have a good mixture of city-delivery and non-city-delivery type addresses so we could test rural address listing and questionnaire delivery methodology. The eight counties we selected in East Central Mississippi met these criteria, and in addition had a diverse population (64 percent White

and 34 percent Black), including an American Indian reservation. We identified many objectives for our test in East Central Mississippi and have planned some 60 formal evaluations. I will not discuss all of these objectives and evaluations here today, but I will describe our test objectives in five areas:

1. Procedures for compiling and updating address lists.
2. Methodology for delivering census questionnaires.
3. Automation of census operations and concurrent processing.
4. Efforts to reduce the nonresponse followup workload.
5. Questionnaire content and design.

Address Lists

The first topic I will discuss, Mr. Chairman, is the compilation and updating of the census address lists. Address lists that are as complete and accurate as possible are essential if we are going to conduct a good census using the mail-out/mail-back method. We use address lists to control the enumeration by mailing or delivering questionnaires to each housing unit on the lists and monitoring the mail returns to determine whether a questionnaire has been returned for a particular unit. Once a housing unit is included in our address lists, we stand an excellent chance of completing the enumeration of that unit and its inhabitants.

In the 1980 census, we created the initial list by purchasing addresses from commercial vendors for the more urban parts of the country and by listing addresses ourselves from scratch for the more rural parts of the country, where commercial lists are not available. We call this rural listing operation "prelist." For both urban and rural areas, we subjected the initial lists to a number of updates performed either by the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) or by our own enumerators. These updates, in which addresses are added, deleted, or corrected are essential to making the lists as complete and accurate as possible, and, thus, to assuring complete coverage of the population and housing units. For urban areas we conducted four update operations: an advance post office check by the USPS several months prior to the census, a "pre-canvass" operation by our enumerators 2-3 months prior to the census, and two more checks by the USPS, one 3 weeks before Census Day and the other at the time of delivery of census questionnaires. For prelist areas, we conducted the latter two USPS checks.

As a result of the 1984 Address List Compilation Test we determined that prelist was the best methodology for compiling rural address lists in 1990. We used prelist to compile the initial lists here in East Central Mississippi. In the summer of 1985, we listed some 79,000 addresses, about 40 percent of which were city-delivery addresses (that is with house number/street name). It is in areas that do not have house number/street name addresses where our listers sometimes have difficulty obtaining mailing addresses that are

recognizable by the postal carriers as mailing addresses. Rural route numbers, lock-boxes, mailboxes distant from homes, and clusters of mailboxes separate from residences are situations that can cause differences between Census Bureau and USPS mailing addresses and make it difficult for enumerators to make follow-up visits.

In this test, we wanted to refine our basic prelist procedures, but also to test adding for prelist areas one of the USPS updates of the address lists that was conducted only in urban areas in 1980--the advance post office check (APOC). Doing a rural APOC might improve the mailing lists and might also serve as a check on whether the postal service could recognize our prelist addresses as addresses to which they could deliver mail (i.e., census questionnaires). If we discovered areas during APOC where the postal service might have difficulty delivering questionnaires, then we could designate those areas for questionnaire delivery by census enumerators instead of by carriers. I will be discussing our test of questionnaire delivery methods later.

To conduct APOC, we delivered address cards to the USPS for every address we found during prelist. The postal carriers checked each card for duplicates, addresses to which they could not deliver mail, and addresses that should be deleted; and they filled "blue" cards for addresses that were apparently not in our file. After the postal service completed the APOC, we instituted a special field reconciliation operation to verify that each address identified by the postal service as a duplicate of another address was really a duplicate; to obtain better address information for cases marked as undeliverable by the postal service; and to locate and geographically code addresses added by the postal service and make sure they were not already on the prelist register. We did not add an address to our file unless we could geographically code it and determine that it was not already in the file.

Although the evaluations of the prelist and APOC operations are still underway, I will share some preliminary results with you. Prelist was completed on time and within budget. About 90 percent of the prelist addresses were classified as deliverable by the USPS, which is added confirmation that prelist is a good method for address compilation in rural areas. A review of prelist materials indicates that our enumerators did not provide householder names for about 18 percent of the non-city delivery addresses. (Householder names are an essential part of an address that is not house number/street name. We also ask listers to provide a description of the location of a housing unit to help follow-up enumerators find it.) Other procedural problems were noted. As a result, we have already held operational meetings to come up with recommendations to improve procedures and enumerator training for the 1990 census prelist.

The APOC and field reconciliation resulted in the addition of about 2,000 addresses to our address files, or almost 3 percent of the total. About 9,000 addresses added by the USPS could not be verified as true adds because they could not be geographically coded. Some of these

may be valid addresses, and we expect we added them in subsequent coverage improvement operations.

We plan at this time, based in part on the experiences in this test census, to conduct an advance post office check in prelist areas in 1990. We believe that it will improve coverage in rural areas in 1990--in Mississippi and nationwide--as well as improve the quality of the addresses. Furthermore, it might help us pinpoint areas where questionnaire delivery by enumerators would be more suitable.

Questionnaire Delivery

Now, Mr. Chairman, I will discuss a second objective of the Mississippi test, alternate methods for delivery of questionnaires. We wanted to test whether, for certain areas where the postal service might have difficulty delivering to our addresses, it would not be better to have enumerators deliver the questionnaires.

After the advance post office check, we split the entire test site into two panels. In one panel, the USPS delivered questionnaires about 2 days before Census Day. In the other panel, census enumerators began leaving questionnaires at each household about 2 weeks before Census Day. At the same time they delivered questionnaires, the enumerators updated the address list for their area. Thus, we call this procedure "update/leave." In the panel where the USPS delivered questionnaires, we had already conducted several months earlier an address list update operation conducted only in urban areas in 1980--the precanvass, in which our enumerators canvassed the area to make any necessary adds, deletes, or corrections to the address list. In both panels, we asked householders to mail the questionnaires back to the collection and processing office in Meridian on Census Day or as soon thereafter as possible.

The field work for update/leave went well and was completed early and under budget. We are evaluating the results of the split-panel test by looking at the final coverage and cost differentials between the two panels, the operational problems possibly associated with update/leave, and other variables of interest. We should have results in the next few months.

Automation

The third topic I will discuss is automation. One of our major goals for the 1990 census is to increase the use of automation. Automating many of the census tasks performed clerically during the 1980 census and beginning automated processing (particularly the conversion of questionnaire data into computer-readable form) earlier than in 1980 will help us release data products in a timely manner, improve accuracy,

lead to greater cost-efficiencies, and give us more control over the entire census process.

Traditionally, most of the activities associated with collecting and processing the census questionnaire (e.g., checking the incoming questionnaires against an address control file) have been paper- and people-intensive tasks. The use of automated equipment can help us deal with the mountains of paper and the thousands of clerical tasks in a much more efficient and controlled way.

In the 1986 Census of East Central Mississippi we used automation in several new areas where we plan to use it in 1990. One of these areas is the control of the enumeration through an automated address control file. During the 1980 census, our address control file was not automated. We printed books or registers of addresses and changes and updates to these address registers were made in pencil by clerical staff. The check-in of mail-returned questionnaires was also performed clerically. Clerks checked in each returned questionnaire one-by-one by looking for the appropriate address and serial number in the address register and recording the date of return and other pertinent information.

We first established an automated address control file and performed automated check-in in our 1985 test censuses. In this year's tests, we worked to refine procedures and build on our experience. We established and automatically updated the address control file. The address control file was maintained on micro computers in the collection and processing office, whereas in 1985 we maintained it on a mainframe computer. We imprinted bar codes containing unique identification numbers on the questionnaires and used electronic pencil-shaped wands attached to micro computers to check-in the questionnaires. This allowed us to monitor the status of the enumeration to know for any address whether a questionnaire had been returned. We generated address labels for those addresses that had not returned questionnaires and mailed reminder cards to them. Finally, when we were ready to begin to personally visit those addresses that did not return questionnaires, we had the computer print out lists of addresses for followup.

We discovered and corrected some minor problems in the automated address control file and automated check-in systems, but basically they worked quite well considering that this was the first time we had decentralized such operations. We plan to automate these features in 1990 and we believe they will greatly improve the census.

The second area related to automation that I will talk about today, Mr. Chairman, is the earlier conversion of data to machine-readable form--or what we call "concurrent processing." For 1990, we are going to perform data conversion about 5-7 months earlier than we did for 1980.

In 1980, we waited until all the work in the district offices was completed before shipping questionnaires to one of three processing centers. This meant that many completed questionnaires that were ready for data conversion lay around in the district offices for several months.

Concurrent processing is made possible by the automated address control file, which, because each questionnaire can be electronically tracked through its unique identification number, allows us to do flow processing. There are many benefits to concurrent processing. For example, it will allow us to identify and correct problems with the data early in the census process and it will allow us to meet our goal of releasing data products in a timely manner.

Planning for concurrent processing in the 1990 census posed two major questions: Where and how would it be done? The "where" issue involved the number of processing offices and the degree of centralization or decentralization. In 1980, when we processed the census questionnaires sequentially, we had three processing centers. With concurrent processing, having so few centers would not be feasible, primarily because of the need to move materials quickly between processing and collection offices. Greater centralization of processing activities also places greater staffing burdens on us, i.e., the need to hire more employees in one employment area. We weighed these concerns against problems related to decentralization, such as the need for more hardware to service a greater number of locations and the difficulties of controlling and supporting many processing offices.

The "how" issue involved the technology we would use to convert questionnaire data into a computer-readable format. In the 1980 census, we used the FOSDIC technology to do this. FOSDIC stands for Film Optical Sensing Device for Input to Computer. The complete data conversion system consists of high-speed cameras that film the questionnaires, film developers to process the raw film into rolls of microfilm, and the FOSDIC machines that read the data from microfilm onto computer tape. This system worked very well in the 1980 census, and also was used in the 1960 and 1970 censuses. FOSDIC is more suitable to a more centralized processing approach. We also considered the key-entry of data as a primary data conversion technique to give us the flexibility to have greater decentralization.

In late April of this year, after reviewing these two issues at planning conferences and in internal working groups, we were able to reach some decisions. We have decided to establish from 10-14 processing centers, which represents less centralization than in 1980 when we had three processing centers, but far greater centralization than some of the scenarios we considered for 1990. We also decided to use FOSDIC (upgraded to perform more quickly and more accurately than in 1980) as the primary data conversion technology. We determined that having two primary data conversion technologies (FOSDIC and keying) would have excessively complicated our processing system for 1990. Keying would not be a viable option as the sole data conversion technology

for the entire census because of the large numbers of keyers and key stations that would be required. We will use keying, however, as a supplement to FOSDIC for entering some of the handwritten data on the questionnaires into computer-readable form.

At the time we planned the 1986 test censuses, we decided to test a more decentralized approach here. We set up a combined collection and processing office and used key entry to convert the data to computer-readable format. This is the first time we have ever attempted in a decentralized location key entry of all the information on the questionnaire. This was a major test objective, because had we decided to have more decentralized processing centers, we would have had to use key-entry as the primary data-conversion technology in some offices. In this test, the equipment and software worked well and the work, which is still underway, is being performed quickly and accurately. In the Los Angeles County test site, we had separate collection and processing offices and used FOSDIC (supplemented by keying) for data conversion.

The decisions we recently reached about our 1990 processing flows retain some elements of the combined collection and processing office approach. For example, in the more rural areas of the country, the census questionnaires will be returned directly to the district offices where they will be automatically checked in using bar-code wand readers attached to microcomputers. After the questionnaires have been clerically edited and additional information obtained (if necessary), they will be sent to a processing center on a flow basis for data conversion using FOSDIC.

We believe that this decision represents the best balance of staffing, equipment, and workload considerations as they relate to the processing and collection offices.

Efforts to Reduce Nonresponse Followup Workload

The fourth topic I will discuss is our efforts to reduce the number of housing units that we have to personally visit. As I mentioned at the beginning of this testimony, we can save money and time by reducing our nonresponse follow-up workload. That is why we are testing new ways to increase mail-response rates. I have already described how our outreach and promotion campaign contributed to a good mail-response rate here. Now, I want to describe two other efforts we tested--motivational inserts in the questionnaires and mail-reminder cards.

First, I will turn to motivational inserts. Research conducted after the 1980 census indicated that for some people, the arrival of the census mailing package was the first they had heard about the census. Thus, the census mailing package itself is a public information vehicle and can be a critical source of information. In the 1986 Census in East Central Mississippi, we redesigned the questionnaire covers and

envelopes to be more attractive and colorful than those for the 1980 census. We are formally testing the effects of including a motivational insert in some of the questionnaire mailing packages.

The test is designed to see whether a brief written appeal for cooperation accompanying mail-out of the census form can improve mail-response rates, lower question nonresponse, and increase cooperation with follow-up enumerators. We are also looking at whether this general-purpose insert has comparable effects for various population subgroups.

The insert included red, white, and blue graphics and listed six reasons "to count yourself in on the census." We expect to have preliminary results from this study by late summer.

The second thing I will describe is mail-reminder cards. As the name implies, these are postcards mailed to addresses to remind householders to return their questionnaires. We tested mail-reminder cards prior to the 1980 census. At that time, since we did not have an automated address control file, we could not pinpoint quickly addresses that had not returned a questionnaire. Although our tests showed some gain in mail-response rates from using the cards, we determined that it was not cost-effective to do a blanket mailing to all addresses.

With an automated address control file, we can quickly determine the addresses for which a questionnaire has not been returned and automatically generate address labels for them. We tested this in the 1985 Census of Tampa, Florida, and found that the mail-reminder cards improved the mail-response rate by about 4 percent.

For the 1986 censuses (in both Mississippi and Los Angeles) we tested two mailings of reminder cards. In Mississippi, we mailed the cards on March 25 and March 29, 9 and 13 days after Census Day, respectively. We did not establish a split-panel design to formally test the effects of reminder cards in Mississippi because it would have complicated our other split-panel tests; however, we do expect to analyze various tabulations to get as much information as possible on their effects. We will do a formal evaluation in Los Angeles.

In both sites, we have learned that there are serious logistical, work-load and timing problems involved in doing targeted mailings of reminder cards in a tight timeframe. These issues must also be considered for 1990, in addition to costs and amount of increase in mail-response rates, before we could decide whether to conduct targeted mailings in 1990.

Questionnaires

Mr. Chairman, the final topic I will talk about is the census questionnaires.

The decennial census is the Nation's primary source of data for small geographic areas and small population groups. A general principle governs the selection of subject content for the census: The census must be aimed soley at data that are required to meet well demonstrated public needs or that are required to fulfill legal mandates or implement governmental programs.

From the very first enumeration in 1790, the census has always been more than a simple headcount of the population. It has asked questions that mirror the concerns of our society. Over the decades, as our society became more complex and our government more sophisticated, we added questions to the census to meet new needs.

As we seek to determine the questionnaire content for the 1990 Census of Population and Housing, we have one overriding goal: We want to balance the needs for data against the length of the census questionnaire and the amount of time it takes respondents to fill it out. On the one hand, we must make sure that the 1990 Census of Population and Housing collects all the critical data our Nation needs to address population and housing issues throughout the 1990's and beyond. These data are used for many important purposes, from apportionment and redistricting to planning and implementing social and housing programs and developing economic policy. On the other hand, we realize that public cooperation could be undermined if the census questionnaire is too lengthy or contains questions that do not meet important public needs.

We believe we struck the proper balance for the 1980 census. Public cooperation and acceptance of the importance of the census was excellent. Over 80 percent of the households returned questionnaires. This is quite an achievement in a society as complex and mobile as ours, especially when we realize that there are many factors that can contribute to nonresponse in the census.

We believe there should be no increase over 1980 in net questionnaire content for the 1990 census. We are looking for ways to shorten the questionnaires; but, as we hold discussions with a broad array of data users, we are hearing many more legitimate and valid data needs than we can reasonably satisfy. At this time, we believe the questionnaires (short form and long form) for the 1990 Census of Population and Housing will be about the same length as those used for the 1980 census.

In 1980, the short-form questionnaire contained the 7 population questions asked of each person, 9 housing questions, and 3 coverage questions. The coverage questions are designed to make sure we count everyone at an address who should be there. The long-form questionnaire contained these questions plus the additional questions asked of only a sample (about 20 percent) of the population.

To make sure that we ask only those questions that meet important public needs, we have held discussions with data users in a number of forums. Local Public Meeting (LPMs), cosponsored by the Census Bureau and local and state organizations, were primary sources of information on the uses of the data at the state and local level. The LPMs afforded a wide variety of users, from the private and public sectors alike, the opportunity to comment on the adequacy of the data and to suggest new or modified data elements for the upcoming census. At least one meeting was held in every state and we completed the last of the 65 meetings in October 1985. Other forums and special outreach efforts--such as conferences dealing with housing issues or the needs for data on race and ethnic groups--also are major sources of suggestions on the content of the 1990 Census of Population and Housing.

For determining Federal data needs, we have sought counsel from other agencies--through 10 Interagency Working Groups and through the Office of Management and Budget's Federal Agency Council on the 1990 Census. We asked the Federal agencies to identify all legal mandates or Federal programs requiring certain data. These exchanges have been important channels of communication.

Census Bureau specialists also apply a number of other criteria to determine a set of potential items for inclusion on the questionnaire. These include, for example, whether the data are needed for small geographic areas or small, widely dispersed population subgroups. We then test proposed new items and modified wording, format, or sequencing for questions that were asked in the previous census. The testing program will help us determine which of the many valid data needs can be pursued for the census.

We have conducted several content studies during the past few years. The National Content Test, which we are conducting right now, is our main testing vehicle. This test is designed to provide information on the reliability of the data collected and the ability and willingness of respondents to answer the questions. The mailout for the National Content Test occurred in late March 1986, followup will continue through the summer, and we will complete analysis of the results this winter.

Although the National Content Test is our main testing vehicle, we did decide to take advantage of the 1986 test censuses, including the Census of East Central Mississippi, to conduct a few content tests. I mentioned above that we redesigned the questionnaire covers and envelopes to be more attractive and that we are testing the effects of including a motivational insert in some of the questionnaire mailing packages. We are also testing alternative wordings for several questionnaire items and a new question on the receipt of noncash income.

Based on the results of our various tests and on our consultations with data users, we will submit to Congress by April 1987 the subject areas we plan to ask in the 1990 census. By April 1988, we will submit the actual questions we plan to ask.

Closing

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my testimony on the 1986 Census of East Central Mississippi. I mentioned at the beginning why we believe this test census here has been a success--the high mail-response rate, the cooperation and support of Mississippians, the early completion of nonresponse followup, and the excellent staff in our collection and processing office. But the test will also be a success if we gain knowledge that we can apply to building a better 1990 census. Through our various tests and evaluations, I am confident we will do that. In 1990, we will look back at the 1986 Census of East Central Mississippi as a milestone in our planning process.

The 1990 Census of Population and Housing will mark the 200th anniversary of census-taking in this country. If our experience here is any indication, I know we can count on the support of Mississippians to make it the best ever. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF THE CENSUS AWARENESS SPECIALIST
Willie DeBerry
Before the Subcommittee on Energy, Nuclear Proliferation,
and Government Processes
Committee on Governmental Affairs
U.S. Senate
July 1, 1986

Introduction

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to brief this subcommittee on our Census Awareness Program activities for the 1986 Census of East Central Mississippi.

Experience has shown that in order for any census to be truly successful, the public must be well informed of its existence and of the benefits that they and their community can realize as the result of a complete count. With this in mind, I--as the Census Awareness Specialist--developed a rather rigorous ongoing program to keep the public informed of our census involvement in East Central Mississippi. I would like to briefly describe four activities that became the main thrust of our overall Census Awareness Program--these include public awareness coverage afforded by the media; an activity that came to be known as Census Sabbath, where we solicited the vocal support of church groups and ministers; a school curriculum project; and assistance and support provided by the local Complete Count Committees.

Media

The amount of participation and cooperation that we received from both the electronic and print media in all eight counties--including the Choctaw reservation--was simply outstanding. The coverage that they afforded us included a countless number of press releases, 33 media appearances involving Census Bureau personnel--such as press conferences and participation in talk shows--as well as numerous other media exposures, including taped announcements to keep the public informed of the various census activities. In addition, 30 billboards featuring "Miss America, Susan Akin" were provided over a 6-county area. These billboards ran for a total of 5 weeks.

Census Sabbath

For Census Sabbath we first compiled a list of some 450 ministers and church organizations throughout the entire census area, then we mailed out requests for their support of our census effort. For example, we asked that they print a census message in their church bulletins, or that they include a census message in their sermons. I also met with 11 Ministerial Alliance groups on an ongoing basis, to keep them informed of the census products and services that were available for their use. The response and enthusiasm received from these individuals and organizations was extremely high, and I would like to take this opportunity to applaud their efforts.

School Curriculum Project

Materials packets for the School Curriculum Project (K-12) were mailed out to all 16 school districts--and to all private schools--located within the 8-county area, including the Choctaw reservation. The purpose of this project was to educate the students on the importance of the census, so that they could pass on the information to their families. While some school districts were unable to implement the project due to a lack of available time, I would like to personally thank the seven districts that did participate, which include: the Choctaw Indian School District, in Neshoba County; the Kemper County School District; the Union Separate School District, in Newton County; the East Jasper Consolidated School District, in Jasper County; the Leake County School District; and the Louisville Municipal School District, in Winston County. Special thanks go out to the Meridian Separate School District, since they had some form of participation in every school within their district. Incidentally, 14 principals and 35 teachers provided post evaluative comments that will help us further improve this project as we move closer to 1990.

Complete Count Committees

The Complete Count Committees are joint committees made up of individuals from both the principal city within each county and the balance of the county. The mayor of the principal city and the president of the county board of supervisors appointed the persons to serve on this committee, which included representatives from the media, religious organizations, minority groups, civic organizations, and so forth. These individuals made speeches on behalf of the Bureau, wrote editorials that appeared in the local newspapers, produced local public service announcements, distributed census promotional materials, assisted in recruiting census workers, located testing and training sites, and provided numerous other services that helped make this a successful census. A great deal of praise goes out to the persons who served on these committees; they were volunteers donating valuable time and putting forth much effort.

Without the total involvement of the persons I have mentioned, the Census Awareness Program would not have been successful. The success of the 1986 Census of East Central Mississippi clearly reflects this involvement, as well as the dedication of all other persons involved in making this a truly successful census. To them we are truly grateful.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REMARKS OF THE U. S. POSTAL SERVICE/CENSUS COORDINATOR
FOR RURAL FIELD TEST FOR EAST CENTRAL MISSISSIPPI
LARRY W. DRISKELL
BEFORE THE U. S. SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY,
NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION AND GOVERNMENT PROCESSES
JULY 1, 1986

In August, 1985, the U. S. Postal Service and the Bureau of the Census began their partnership for the 1986 test for the eight counties in East Central Mississippi. The key to a successful mail-out/mail-back census count was to compile an accurate mailing list.

The 1986 Census included the counties of Attala, Jasper, Kemper, Lauderdale, Leake, Neshoba, Newton, Winston and the Mississippi Choctaw Indian Reservation. This was the rural area of the test.

We began by training our managers concerning the main objectives--rural address list development, accurate questionnaire delivery, and maintenance, since some addresses have no house numbers or street names (e.g. P. O. Box 4 or Frank Jones, Rural Route 2). The training session was monitored by personnel from the Postal Service Training and Development Department, the Bureau of the Census, and the Customer Service Department, Headquarters U. S. Postal Service. After the session, the managers were sent back to their offices to train their clerks and carriers to prepare for the Advance Post Office Check.

The Census Bureau submitted the address cards they had compiled and each post office had to make sure that each address had a card and that the information on them was correct. This involved approximately 80,365 addresses. Corrections and additions were made on about forty per cent of the address listings.

Training for the corrections and additions was given to carriers on the morning they were to correct the listings. Carriers were sent out to deliver the mail on their routes. Upon their return to the office they cased cards, checked for missing cards, duplicates, and cards with insufficient addresses. They made necessary corrections on each card. The supervisor would then perform a quality control check on each route and return the cards to my office for verification. I returned them to the Bureau of the Census. Each carrier worked about four to six hours on the Advance Post Office Check. The supervisors were responsible for keeping up with additional time and the number of corrections made.

The preparation for Census Day--March 16, 1986--began in February, 1986. Again we trained our managers for casing checks, for delivery, and for verification of the complete mailing process. They went back into the field and trained their clerks and carriers. Because some census cards arrived early and were delivered prematurely, we cancelled our March 6 casing check and rescheduled it for March 13, 1986.

Again our carriers cased the census questionnaires and cards. Each card was to let us know that an enumerator would deliver a questionnaire to each residence. After casing, the carriers checked to see if there were any missing addresses. If there was a missing address card, they filled out a two-part card, removing one copy and casing the other. The carriers also carried address cards on their routes to fill out if they found a residence had been missed. After casing, the supervisor performed a quality control check on each route.

We delivered a census questionnaire or a card to each household on March 14, 1986. All address cards were sent back to my office for verification and the local census office picked them up to prepare questionnaires for the residences that had been missed.

The Postal Service worked with the Census Bureau to get as much promotional coverage as possible. Each postmaster was asked to contact newspaper offices in

his or her town, to contact television stations for coverage, and to announce to schools and churches, so the public would be aware of the importance of filling out and mailing back the questionnaires to the Census Bureau. Part of the coverage included Miss America, Susan Akin, from Meridian, Mississippi, who did spots on television to remind the public to mail back the questionnaires.

This test was conducted for the purpose of resolving any problems that might arise during the actual census. Although we encountered numerous problems, there were not any that could not be resolved.

In conclusion and as a result of the Advance Post Office Check, we believe the U. S. Postal Service can do a complete and better job with address corrections and can deliver all census questionnaires. We recommended that the Bureau of the Census and the Postal Service work together to convey to the printer the proper make-up of address labels to ensure prompt delivery, and to date delivery sacks in order to prevent early or late delivery. Also, we suggested that after the addresses have been added and corrected the printer keep the mailing in carrier route presort, since each route is made up in sequence delivery. This would prevent unit distribution and the questionnaires could be mailed at a reduced postage rate.

The purpose of the Postal Service in-depth involvement was to assure the Census Bureau and the General Accounting Office that expenses could be controlled and that better results could be obtained by using the Postal Service. As a result, our managers and employees conducted the test professionally and cost efficiently.

This Advance Post Office Check gave two government agencies an opportunity to work together for one common goal.

WITNESS MY SIGNATURE, this the 20th day of June, 1986.

Larry W. Driskell

LARRY W. DRISKELL, Postal Supervisor

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JIMMY KEMP, MAYOR, MERIDIAN, MS

The City of Meridian Statement on the 1986 Test Census for the United States Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs.

How did the City of Meridian Promote the 1986 Test Census?

As a joint effort to promote the 1986 Test Census, the City of Meridian, Town of Marion and Lauderdale County appointed eleven (11) local citizens to serve on the 1986 Test Census Complete Count Committee.

The publicity and community outreach objectives as stated in the 1986 Census of East Central Mississippi Executive Briefing of Governmental Officials were fulfilled by this census committee in cooperation with the local census office staff.

With the assistance of Mr. Willie DeBerry, who served the U. S. Census Bureau as the local census outreach specialist, and the Complete Count Committee, a mass media promotional campaign was established in support of the 1986 Test Census.

TV, radio and print media messages were disseminated promoting the census throughout the city and county to ensure that all local citizens were aware of the Test Census. Press releases, news and feature stories, posters, flyers and speeches to civic, educational and religious organizations were some of the means utilized by Mr. DeBerry and this committee to promote the Test Census.

How Important is an Accurate Census Count to the City of Meridian?

Meridian is classified as a non-entitlement small city with a population of 46,577. We have a great desire to obtain an accurate census count and to obtain entitlement status with a population of 50,000 or more.

If an accurate count reveals that the city has obtained entitlement status, we would receive annual CDBG funding and would not have to compete for discretionary grants with other small cities.

With entitlement status, the city would be able to implement community development and housing programs such as residential, street improvements, recreational facilties and demolition of substandard structures and sites for new construction to attract new development and jobs. Overall, the funds will provide resources to produce substantial long-term improvements in the city.

As has been expressed to the local census office manager and staff, we would like very much to reach 50,000 or more in population. (See attached letters to local census office.)

How was the 1986 Test Census Received by Local Residents?

If the telephone calls which were received by the city's Community Development Department are any indication as to the level of community participation and cooperation generated during this census, then, the City of Meridian should obtain its desired goal as a result of this census.

Several concerned citizens contacted the city on either how to obtain a census form, the willingness to replace a lost census form or to inquire about jobs with the local census office.

The benefits of jobs, updated census data, increased public awareness and understanding of programs using census data and being a part of the Bicentennial Census planning process have all been received with gratitude by the local residents.

We hope that since the promotion of the census was so outstanding that it had a positive effect upon the local community participation which will be reflected in the 1986 Post Census Counts.

What is your opinion on the Test Census Local Review Program?

By allowing the city to review the census counts twice: once before the census questionnaires are mailed (precensus local review) and once after the enumeration has been completed (post census local review), will contribute to a more accurate census count for the city.

This program gives the city government an opportunity to actively participate in the Test Census and to identify any discrepancies in the counts of the Census Bureau.

J. W. (Jimmy) Kemp
Mayor

Post Office Box 1430
Meridian, Mississippi 39302-1430

the City of MERIDIAN

Councilmembers
George Thomas, Ward 1
Norvin Wilson, Ward 2
Ed Frasier, Ward 3
Hobert Kornegay, Ward 4
Howard Williams, Ward 5

May 13, 1986

Ms. Martha Mann, Manager
U. S. Census Bureau Local Office
2119 Highway 19 North
Meridian, MS 39301

Dear Martha:

The City of Meridian has experienced great pleasure in working with the local census office on the 1986 Test Census. The assistance that we have received from your office has been immeasurable. The assistance received from Mr. Willie DeBerry, local census outreach specialist, of this office has been especially helpful in coordinating the Lauderdale County/City of Meridian Complete Count Committee.

As you know, Meridian is classified as an nonentitlement small city with a population of 46,577. We have a great desire to obtain a population of 50,000 or more and to be classified as an entitlement city. Being classified as an entitlement city would assure the City that it would receive annual CDBG funding and that it would not have to compete for discretionary grants with other small cities.

By receiving annual block grant funds, the City would be able to implement community development and housing programs such as residential rehabilitation, street improvements, playgrounds and demolition of substandard structures and sites for new construction to attract new development and jobs. Overall, the funds will provide resources to produce substantial long term improvements in the City.

We will appreciate every effort that your office will make in assuring us that we will obtain 50,000 in population and obtain entitlement status. Please do not hesitate to contact me if we can provide any assistance in making this objective a reality.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Kemp

Jimmy Kemp, Mayor

JWK:sw

cc: Willie DeBerry

the City Of
MERIDIAN

Post Office Box 1430
Meridian, Mississippi 39302-1430

May 27, 1986

Mr. Willie DeBerry
Outreach Specialist
U. S. Census Bureau, Local Office
2119 - Hwy. 19 North
Meridian, MS 39301

Dear Mr. DeBerry:

I appreciate your telephone call on Friday providing me current census statistical information. This illustrates your concern for and commitment to the 1990 Test Census Count program.

During our conversation, I emphasized that obtaining an accurate population count for the City and reaching the 50,000 mark is especially important to Mayor Kemp. This is because of the many anticipated benefits for the citizens of Meridian; i.e. CDBG funds and other entitlement state or federal funds. He has expressed his concern and offered his full cooperation in a recent letter to you.

As we discussed Friday, the City is analyzing the concept of annexation of land adjacent to the city limits in certain areas. Should the population in these areas be required to exceed the 50,000 population count, the City could accelerate annexation procedures. As you can see, we are most serious in reaching the 50,000 mark.

It is understood that the primary goal of the 1990 Test Census Count program is to determine a workable and effective census procedure for 1990 that would be used throughout the country. We totally support this. However, we also want, during this process, to take what action that may be necessary to obtain an accurate population count.

I am requesting that as soon as preliminary census count figures are available, that you notify Mayor Kemp or me. If at all possible, inform us prior to these preliminary figures so that annexation options can be examined.

Again, I take this opportunity to offer the assistance and cooperation of the Community Development Department to you and your program. Any questions or comments, please let me know. Your cooperation regarding this most important matter is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Don H. Farrar

DHF:sw

cc: Jimmy Kemp, Mayor of Meridian
Martha Mann, Manager, Local Census Office

Report to the Committee on Governmental Affairs, Subcommittee on Energy Nuclear Proliferation and Government Processes

Hello, I am Ivury W. Lyles, County Agent with the Mississipoi Cooperative Extension Service stationed in Philadelphia, MS., Neshoba County. I am serving as Liason Person for the Neshoba County Board of Supervisors. I also served on the Complete Count Committee for the 1986 Test Census of East Central Mississippi. I would like to address the following as it relates to the 1986 Census of East Central Mississippi on questionaire design and content, delivery data and collection methods, publicity, community outreach techniques and community coonera-tion and participation.

Under questionaire design and content, I find very few things that are not suitable or that the County does not agree with. First was the placing of enrolled college students. I think that students away in colleges and universities should be counted in their home county rather than where the college is located because, they are citizens of their home county, they vote in their home county, and their parents are most likely tax nayers in that city and/or county.

The second point under questionaire desion and content is unemployment data. In my opinion, the data collected by the Census Bureau is not of sufficient quality or quantity for the local government officials to use in preparinn recruitment information for new industry. Also, education goes hand in hand with unemployment. Therefare, more emnhasis should be used on obtaining type of education available in the local community whether it be vocational degrees or terminal degrees so that this information can be matched with industry recruitment and nlacement.

Delivery Data and Collection Methods - I found that the Census Bureau used local persons in collecting most of the information. This allowed them to have someone with first hand knowledge of the area.

I found that the combination of postal delivery and census takers should have given some indication as to what would be best for the 1990 Census. Their follow-up campaign evidently was most effective with over 90% + return rate as stated in the last briefinn of the Complete County Committee. This was a very high rate of return, in my opinion.

The mass media campaign was very good in my opinion. I saw several advertisements in the local paper and on local television stations. I help arrange several radio broadcasts that involved community leaders. From what I saw and heard, I believe all segments of the population were involved in getting the message across.

In conclusion, the Census Bureau did a good job of reaching all segments of the population in Neshoba County. Neshoba County has so far been pleased with their efforts.

STATEMENT OF JACK RUSH, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS, MERIDIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

My affiliation with the 1986 test census was as Chairman of the Complete Count Committee for Lauderdale County.

It was a very rewarding experience for myself and hopefully somewhat beneficial for the Bureau of the Census.

I received information from Mr. Willie DeBerry, Community Outreach Specialist of the Meridian office, who also orientated me of my responsibilities as Chairman of the Complete Count Committee.

Our committee was comprised of eleven citizens of the local community who had the ability to inform and encourage citizens to be counted and be involved in the census process. I am employed as the Director of Communications for the Meridian Chamber of Commerce, which gives me the opportunity to be in contact with our membership.

Through the means of our newsletter which is printed semi-monthly, it was possible to inform and remind citizens of the purpose of the 1986 census in our area.

I also mailed news releases to all members of the local media encouraging their help and cooperation in promoting the census. I was also able to mail a letter to over 200 clubs and organizations in the local area to educate them and encourage their members to participate in the census. As a result of this letter many requests were received for a guest speaker at local meetings to inform them about the census.

I was able to speak to various groups such as the (Exchange Club, Civitan Club, church groups, Insurance Women of Mississippi, etc.).

I feel that the publicity and community awareness was well planned and carried out.

I would like to thank the United States Government for the opportunity to work on such a worthwhile project.

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Submitted to:

HONORABLE THAD COCHRAN, CHAIRMAN
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY, NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION, AND GOVERNMENT PROCESSES
SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
Hearings at the Police Department
Meridian Mississippi

by:

PHILLIP MARTIN, CHIEF
MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS
Route 7 Box 21
Philadelphia MS 39350

July 1, 1986

P. Phillip Martin
Chief

My name is Phillip Martin, and I am the elected Chief of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, the only federally-recognize tribe in the State of Mississippi. Our existance is one of the reasons that the Bureau of the Census decided to conduct the test census in east central Mississippi.

A survey of all tribal households on and near reservation lands conducted by the tribal government in 1982 found that there were some 4,400 members of the tribe. An individual survey instrument was filled out for each of 817 households, and we feel that our survey was fairly accurate -- that we missed only about 100 persons because of inter-community migrations while the survey was being conducted. Of the total of 4,400, some 2,992 (554 households) lived on tribal trust, or reservation, land.

We can contrast our results to those of the 1980 Census, which enumerated only 2,756 persons living on trust land, and find that slightly between 200 and 250 people were missed by the Census Bureau, about 8 per cent of the on-reservation population. This meant the reduction of several thousands of dollars per year in several of our federal programs keyed to the on-reservation population, including General Revenue Sharing and the Job Training Partnership Act.

Although we must reserve judgement on the test census as a whole (we will not receive the postcensus counts from the Meridian office until the week of July 28), I can state that the cooperation and support we have received from the Census Bureau has been like night and day compared with the 1980 Census. Martha Mann, Office Manager, and her staff have been very helpful, working closely with Clif Saunders and Doyle Tubby of my staff to make sure as many families as possible have been located and followed up on. They worked with us on field tests prior to the mailing of the questionnaires which, we think, significantly improved the ease with which the questionnaires were administered to a population whose native language is not English.

We would, however, like to suggest a few modifications in the approach used, which might be considered by the Census Bureau prior to the 1990 census. First, there needs to be additional efforts toward training local officials in the details of administration of the census -- both Indian and non-Indian local officials. My staff had to do research on their own to find out some answers to technical questions. Secondly, the enumeration districts need to be congruent with tribal trust lands. The districts used this spring overlapped trust and non-trust lands; and we feel it would be easier to keep track of the reservation residents if their tracts were separate. Finally, we would advise that for Indian areas the Census Bureau be empowered to hire directly its Indian enumerators, rather than having to recruit through the Employment Service. We had good cooperation from Ms. Maun and her staff on this, but the Employment Service does not have especially good rapport with the Indian population, and using that agency as the recruiting agency was a problem.

In closing, I would like to say that we are proud that our area of Mississippi was chosen as a site for the test census, and hope that the tribal government has been able to provide the Census Bureau with some enlightenment on the problems in and approaches to enumerating American Indian people. I would be glad to answer and questions you might have.

Thank you.

NEWTON COUNTY IMPROVEMENT, INC.
108 4TH ST., P.O. BOX 491, NEWTON, MS 39345

TO: THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION & GOVERNMENT PROCESSES
FROM: WALTER E. GARDNER, PRESIDENT WEG
NEWTON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT, INC.
RE: CENSUS BUREAU'S FIELD TEST, 1986 (EAST MISSISSIPPI COUNTIES)
DATE: JUNE 23, 1986

BASING MY ASSESSMENT ON PREVIOUS CENSUS ACTIVITY IN OUR AREA, IT IS MY OPINION THAT THE 1986 CENSUS COUNT IN THE EAST CENTRAL MISSISSIPPI AREA WAS THE BEST ORGANIZED AND MOST THOROUGH OF RECENT UNDERTAKINGS. I BELIEVE EVERY "GRASS ROOT" OR COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATION WAS TAPPED BY THE ORGANIZERS FOR INPUT AND INVOLVEMENT. THIS INVOLVEMENT, I BELIEVE, LESSENED THE AMOUNT OF THE USUAL APPREHENSION MANY CITIZENS EXPERIENCE WHEN PERSONAL INFORMATION IS BEING SOUGHT.

ALTHOUGH THE ORGANIZATION WHICH I AM CURRENTLY PRESIDENT OF IS NOT A "MINORITY ORGANIZATION" BY DESIGN, IT DOES HAVE A HIGHER NUMBER OF BLACK MEMBERS THAN WHITE. THIS BEING SO, WE WERE ABLE TO HAVE FORUMS DURING OUR REGULAR AND SPECIAL MEETINGS TO HELP BLACKS UNDERSTAND THE CENSUS ACTIVITY, AS WELL AS FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE WITH THE WHOLE PROCESS. WE BELIEVE THAT SUCH ACTIVITIES LED TO A HIGHER PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPATION AND WITH MORE ACCURATE INFORMATION.

FINALLY, WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK MR. WILLIE DeBERRY AND OTHER BUREAU OFFICIALS FOR THE PROFESSIONAL WAY IN WHICH THEY LED THE EFFORTS FOR A GOOD COUNT. IN THE LONG RUN, WE BELIEVE ACCURATE INFORMATION WILL BENEFIT OUR AREA.

WEG/dl